

EL SALVADOR:

Military Linchpin Growing

*Salvadoran military leaders face discontent within the military over the perceived lack of official response to rebel peace initiatives and recent criticism from Washington of the military's human rights record.*

Armed Forces Chief Ponce recently met with Defense Minister Vides and First Vice-President-designate Rodriguez—a close adviser to ailing President Duarte—to offer the military's help in formulating a political strategy to take the political initiative from the guerrillas. Vides urged that the government devise a coherent position on the guerrillas' peace proposals, one he could take to the troops, whom he described as increasingly restive over the government's apparent confusion. During the recent Central American summit, Vides warned Presidents Arias of Costa Rica and Ortega of Nicaragua that pressing San Salvador to postpone the presidential election scheduled for 19 March would precipitate a coup.

Some segments of the armed forces—particularly junior officers—are angry over recent US warnings on human rights. Colonel Ponce is under pressure from officers of all ranks to ignore the possibility that the US was curtailing military assistance. Ponce believes criticism of human rights abuses has begun to erode the armed forces' confidence in continued US support. Some officers believe Washington supports the Christian Democrats in the presidential election and will halt aid if the rightist ARENA party wins.

Comment: Senior officers probably believe public warnings of a coup will dissuade the government from accepting the rebel proposal to postpone the election beyond the constitutional limit, which the Defense Minister believes is 31 March. Although no significant steps have been taken to delay the balloting, postponing it beyond constitutional limits, particularly if civilian leaders continue to appear indecisive and reactive, would increase the chances for military intervention. Senior officers, understanding the importance of US aid to the war effort, will probably be able to contain discontent over the human rights criticisms.

27 February 1989

Approved for Release

NOV 2017

5 U 6 1

[REDACTED]

ADDITIONAL INFO 10/10/82-00  
DAILY - 4/21/83

✓ **EL SALVADOR: Allegations of Military Abuses Continue**

Cases of human rights abuses continue to dog the Salvadoran military even though it has made considerable progress in that area since the early 1980s. The police arrested an Army major this week on charges he had ordered the killing of 10 civilians last September. A military investigation said the officer planned the operation in order to eliminate [REDACTED] rebel collaborators and subsequently arranged the coverup. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church's human rights office has accused government troops of raping and killing two rebel medical personnel and killing three wounded insurgents during a raid last month. The office has a history of incorrect reporting on alleged Army killings. [REDACTED] Chief of Staff Ponce is satisfied with the military's explanation that the guerrillas were killed defending a field hospital. [REDACTED] and has ordered no further investigation.

Comment: The major's arrest was largely the result of US pressure and growing concern in the military about continued US aid. He probably will face disciplinary action because senior officers are eager to avoid additional negative publicity from the controversial human rights case. The military leadership also is disinclined, however, to investigate allegations of abuse forcefully, despite efforts to inspire better human rights performance. Although the circumstances of the attack against the field hospital remain unclear, rebel support groups probably will use the issue as the core of their campaign against the armed forces and the government.

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

4 March 1984

[REDACTED]

1 5 9 5

If the Sandinistas are successful in redefining the Equipulas democratization provisions using human rights criteria, Nicaragua and the FMLN will point increasingly to alleged government abuses or the inability to control death squad activity. This poses a potentially acute public relations problem, especially for an ARENA administration. Government refusal or inability to rein in human rights abuses or negotiate with the FMLN could have repercussions in the US Congress, possibly threatening bipartisan support for continuing US aid.

#### Implications for US Interests

In the most likely scenario—a protracted war of attrition—the key political battle will shift to the United States. The FMLN will endeavor to reinvigorate US political opposition to continuing military and economic support. The FMLN's January 1989 peace plan is clearly part of this strategy—a seemingly forthcoming offer that meets many of the government's oft-repeated demands, the rejection of which will make the government appear rigid and duplicitous.

For the Salvadoran Government, the task will be essentially defensive. While carefully monitoring US Congressional opinion, it will attempt to refute allegations by the guerrillas and their sympathizers of human rights abuses and corruption, remain open to the concept of a regional peace accord and dissenting strains of opinion, and ensure that the election is fair, and unmarked by significant fraud.

If the government loses the public relations war with the FMLN, it may well find itself facing reduced levels of economic and military aid or conditionality on continuing aid that it will find burdensome or even intolerable. US leverage in supporting the survival of El Salvador's democratic institutions and improvement in the human rights arena derives from continuing high levels of US economic and military aid. In



Director of Central Intelligence

# NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY

Saturday, 4 March 1960



Approved for Release

NOV 1963

1 3 8 5

4 March 1960

[REDACTED]

71 9

✓ **EL SALVADOR: Allegations of Military Abuses Continue**

Cases of human rights abuses continue to dog the Salvadoran military even though it has made considerable progress in that area since the early 1980s. The police arrested an Army major this week on charges he had ordered the killing of 10 civilians last September. A military investigation said the officer planned the operation in order to eliminate rebel collaborators and subsequently arranged the coverup. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church's human rights office has accused government troops of raping and killing two rebel medical personnel and killing three wounded insurgents during a raid last month. The office has a history of incorrect reporting on alleged Army killings. Chief of Staff Ponce is satisfied with the military's explanation that the guerrillas were killed defending a field hospital. [REDACTED] and has ordered no further investigation.

**Comment:** The major's arrest was largely the result of US pressure and growing concern in the military about continued US aid. He probably will face disciplinary action because senior officers are eager to avoid additional negative publicity from the controversial human rights case. The military leadership also is disinclined, however, to investigate allegations of abuse forcefully, despite efforts to inspire better human rights performance. Although the circumstances of the attack against the field hospital remain unclear, rebel support groups probably will use the issue as the core of their campaign against the armed forces and the government.

[REDACTED]

4 March 1989

6

1 3 9 5

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

✓ **EL SALVADOR: Allegations of Military Abuses Continue**

Cases of human rights abuses continue to dog the Salvadoran military even though it has made considerable progress in that area since the early 1980s. The police arrested an Army major this week on charges he had ordered the killing of 10 civilians last September. A military investigation said the officer planned the operation in order to eliminate rebel collaborators and subsequently arranged the coverup. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church's human rights office has accused government troops of raping and killing two rebel medical personnel and killing three wounded insurgents during a raid last month. The office has a history of incorrect reporting on alleged Army killings. [REDACTED] Chief of Staff Ponce is satisfied with the military's explanation that the guerrillas were killed defending a field hospital. [REDACTED] and has ordered no further investigation.

Comment: The major's arrest was largely the result of US pressure and growing concern in the military about continued US aid. He probably will face disciplinary action because senior officers are eager to avoid additional negative publicity from the controversial human rights case. The military leadership also is disinclined, however, to investigate allegations of abuse forcefully, despite efforts to inspire better human rights performance. Although the circumstances of the attack against the field hospital remain unclear, rebel support groups probably will use the issue as the core of their campaign against the armed forces and the government. [REDACTED]

4 March 1989

[REDACTED]

170495



EL SALVADOR:

Violence Threatens Inauguration Thursday

*The Salvadoran insurgents, hoping to disrupt the presidential inauguration on Thursday, have intensified attacks on military and economic targets and are planning assassinations, including a possible attempt against President-elect Cristiani.*

The guerrillas' nationwide hit-and-run attacks—expected to continue through early next month and to be concentrated in San Salvador—are intended to distract attention from the inauguration and to demonstrate that the insurgency remains a potent threat. In addition to their recent attack on the 1st Infantry Brigade headquarters—which caused minimal damage—the rebels plan to strike the presidential palace and a military training center. They also plan to hit businesses linked to rightwing interest and have moved extra men and supplies into the capital.

In addition to Cristiani, the guerrillas plan to kill several high-ranking officials, including the Defense Minister and the new Minister of Economy. Cristiani's associates and US officials are concerned about his lax attitude toward personal security.

The Army has mobilized troops around the capital to counter the insurgent offensive and has deployed forces to guerrilla strongholds in western and central El Salvador.

Comment: Although aggressive operations by government forces are likely to preempt or counter much of the planned guerrilla activity, the insurgents still could score propaganda points through limited acts of terrorism, sabotage, or a transportation ban in the capital. Reports of guerrilla assassination plans appear credible following their successful murder of the Attorney General last month and the recent attempt on the head of the National Assembly.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

30 May 1989

10 March

The Army takes out a newspaper ad to express its support of President Cristiani's peace efforts.

\_\_\_\_\_ reports that the Revolutionary Party of Central America Workers is planning to take small arms from military personnel and civilians in San Salvador.

2 April

A car bomb explodes outside the National Police Academy, killing six people, including four cadets, and wounding 27 cadets and four civilians.

5 April

Commandos from the 6th Brigade find two FMLN weapon caches containing more than 11,000 rounds of ammunition and 300 pounds of explosives near \_\_\_\_\_

6 April

The Armed Infantry Battalion raids an FMLN camp in \_\_\_\_\_, killing four guerrillas and capturing three AK-47 rifles and an assortment of war material.

7 April

Homesteaders \_\_\_\_\_ discover a truck carrying arms and explosives traveling toward the Salvadoran border. The cargo includes 34 AKM assault rifles, 78 ammunition rounds, 14 pounds of TNT, and five rolls of detonation cord.

Information from a Honduran \_\_\_\_\_ results in the arrest of two rebels transporting arms from Honduras and the discovery of an FMLN safehouse.

8 April

Juan Tomas Murrero, the Secretary General of the Latin Federated Association of Independent Unions of El Salvador, is killed in an automobile accident.

11 April

The FMLN launches a harassment attack against 6th Brigade troops in the San Marcos Laipa area.

16 April

Unknown assailants assassinate Roberto Hueso Nativ, the justice of the peace in \_\_\_\_\_ La Unión Department, in his home.

\_\_\_\_\_ reports the Salvadorean Communist Party/Armed Forces of Liberation is working to form a clandestine political structure at the National University of El Salvador.



17 April

Chief of Staff Colonel Ponce begins a week-long visit to Taiwan.

20 April

Teachers in Soyapango stage a one-day work stoppage to protest the arrest of the former secretary of arbitration of a leftist teachers' union.

21 April

Special Unit of the 4th Military Detachment operating in Jocotalito engages in a series of firefights with the FMLN. Seven insurgents are killed.

A car explosion kills Dr. Raulillo Heredia Tejeda, a leftist professor at the University of El Salvador.

22 April

Former Army Colonel Ochoa alleges on a US television program that senior officers other than Colonel Benavides—including Vice Defense Minister Colonel Zapata—were involved in the decision to kill the Jesuits last November.

Colonel Zapata denies allegations of his involvement in the Jesuit murders and offers to testify before the judge.

25 April

Judge Zamora denies a defense motion to change the venue of the Jesuit case. He also requests that members of the Honor Board testify before the court.

27 April

An unidentified armed group reportedly murders five suspected drug dealers in western El Salvador over the course of a week.

28 April

The charges against all but two of the nine military defendants accused in the San Salvador massacre of 10 persons in September 1982 are dismissed. Charges remain against the major who allegedly gave the order.

PA 11001. 15121146 NC  
151117 - 2050 2787

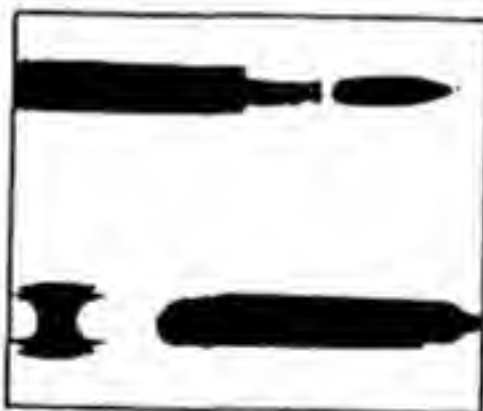
# El Salvador: Insurgent Assassination Pistols

[redacted] recently acquired a description of a new double-barreled handgun in the possession of a People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) commando cell in San Salvador. [redacted] the unit has [redacted] such weapons for use in killing senior Salvadoran political and military officials. The ERP [redacted] tested one of the pistols by killing a suspected government informant early this month. [redacted] had indicated earlier that such a pistol was in the hands of another ERP cell.

The weapon described is an extremely rare, silenced, double-barreled derringer identical to one recovered [redacted] an organization trained and armed by the Soviet KGB. This meticulously manufactured pistol probably was made in a special KGB facility that, [redacted] develops special assassination weapons.

The ERP probably got these pistols via Nicaragua or Cuba, which supply much of the insurgents' Soviet Bloc ordnance. There is no evidence the insurgents have ever received weapons directly from the Soviets, but it is not likely Moscow would make such politically sensitive weapons available to allied states without some control over their distribution.

Information [redacted] indicates a gas-piston derringer may have been used in an unsuccessful attempt to kill a [redacted] defector in [redacted]. Two bullets lodged in the victim's torso, but no powder burns were found on his shirt, and witnesses heard no shots even though the victim believed he was shot at close range.



Gas-piston derringer [redacted] short barrel length and limited ammunition capacity suggest intended for political assassinations rather than special military operations. expended contained-gas cartridge shows piston used to expel the bullet at subsonic velocity, seal all noise-producing gas inside.

Approved for Release

30 September 1989

NAV FOR

EL SALVADOR Insurgents Plan More Assassinations

El Salvador's FMLN insurgents continue to attack government officials and plan assassinations despite their public commitment to dialogue. [redacted] rebels have surveilled the Vice President and the President of the National Assembly. [redacted] in preparation for an assassination attempt. [redacted] FMLN leaders plan to attack ARENA chairman Roberto D'Aubuisson's house or vehicle with antitank weapons. An urban commando cell [redacted] has obtained [redacted] silenced pistols made for killing at close range. [redacted] indicate the military and the guerrillas have suffered relatively high casualties since the rebels began nationwide attacks on Monday. [redacted]

Comment: Rebel plans and the acquisition of more sophisticated assassination weapons belie FMLN claims that the high command has not sanctioned political murders and that they are conducted primarily by rogue elements. Moreover, the timing and coordination of this week's attacks suggest the FMLN was preparing for them during the peace negotiations in Mexico City. Attacks are likely to continue as the FMLN attempts to press the government before the peace talks set for 16-17 October in San Jose. [redacted]

[redacted]  
30 SEPTEMBER 1987

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

NID - 8 NOV 1984

EL SALVADOR: Capital Tense

The Salvadoran military, [REDACTED] says FMLN insurgents plan a series of urban attacks soon, possibly this week. [REDACTED] indicates an unusual concentration of rebels in and around San Salvador, and [REDACTED] said last week that [REDACTED] platoons had moved from insurgent base areas to the vicinity of the city over the previous two weeks. [REDACTED] says the FMLN has stockpiled homemade bombs at the National University in San Salvador. Government troops are on alert amid threats of more political assassinations by the guerrillas and fears of reprisals by rightists or renegade elements in the military.

Comment: The government will try to avoid a cycle of violence and persuade the FMLN to reconsider their suspension of participation in peace talks. Nevertheless, the Army will be hard pressed to check sporadic urban terrorism, especially assassination attempts against military officers and rightists. Rebel plans also call for seizing several government buildings, but the insurgents are more likely to launch rocket attacks against government installations and intensify economic sabotage.

Approved for Release •

NOV 1993

8 November 1984

11: 1 1/2 90

In Brief

Americas

— Salvadoran officials say military unit implicated in November slaying of Jesuits by initial ballistics tests. 47 confined to quarters pending confirmation. . . same unit searched Jesuit premises three days before murder.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

*SECRET JAN 71*

**EL SALVADOR: Officers Arrested in Jesuit Case**

Three junior Salvadoran officers have been arrested in connection with the murder of six Jesuit priests and two women in November, [REDACTED] but the investigation appears far from complete. Armed Forces Chief of Staff Ponce says ballistic and handwriting evidence implicates the three officers. President Cristiani has convened a special military tribunal to assist in the investigation, ordering it to ensure a complete and impartial investigation no matter who appears to be guilty. [REDACTED]

**Comment:** Ponce and other senior military officials appear committed to resolving the case but may face resistance from some officers determined to protect the military's standing. The presence of senior officers on the tribunal should assist in the interrogation of other officers. Cristiani's decision to keep the membership of the tribunal secret is, nevertheless, indicative of the potential for violence against those who implicate the military. Even if evidence in the case appears conclusive, weaknesses in the Salvadoran judicial system will impede prosecution. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1991



**EL SALVADOR:**

**Investigation of Jesuit Murders Stalled**

*Slow progress in investigating the murder of six Jesuit priests last November and new allegations of broader military involvement have renewed doubts about the Salvadoran Government's commitment to resolving the case.*

The investigation appears to be at a standstill. [REDACTED] that Judge Zamora, who is heading the investigation, has not aggressively solicited information to build a stronger case against Col. Guillermo Benavides, who is accused of ordering the murders, and eight other suspects. Zamora has not interviewed senior officers who attended a commanders' meeting the night of the killings and only recently sought testimony from members of the military Honor Commission formed in January to conduct an internal armed forces investigation. The commission claims it did not keep records and did not issue a written report, [REDACTED]

Army Col. (ret.) Sigifredo Ochoa alleged on a US news program last month that Vice Minister of Defense Zepeda and other senior officers may have participated in the decision to kill the Jesuits. Although the [REDACTED] that Zepeda has no control over tactical units and was not in the chain of command the night of the murders, rumors of his involvement persist. Zepeda has offered to testify before the judge, but Zamora has not yet interviewed him. [REDACTED]

Judicial authorities announced Monday that a notebook allegedly kept by Benavides and requested as evidence by the judge has disappeared. Four potential military witnesses [REDACTED] were sent abroad for training and will not be available to testify until later this month. [REDACTED]

**Comment:** Growing criticism of the government's investigation and a recent move by the US Congress to cut military aid to El Salvador may prompt President Cristiani to press the judicial authorities to expand the investigation; he may also ask foreign experts, such as the FBI, for help—as he did early in the inquiry. Nonetheless, the apparent reluctance of the judge to follow up potential leads, legal constraints on the use of evidence—codefendants cannot testify against each other—and the grudging cooperation of the most senior officers probably will cause further delays in bringing the case to trial.

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

EL SAL VADOR:

#### Military Lagging on Human Rights

*Apparent foot-dragging in the six-month-old investigation of the murders of the six Jesuit priests and persistent allegations of abuses are overshadowing the Salvadoran military's efforts to improve its human rights image.* [REDACTED]

The military has taken several steps in recent months to appear more responsive to human rights concerns. [REDACTED] the High Command has secretly named a permanent military human rights board to investigate alleged abuses by military personnel. Defense Minister Larios recently promised a rapid response to judicial requests for information on the Jesuit case. [REDACTED]

Despite these efforts, the judge who presides over the Jesuit investigation announced this month that the military is not cooperating with it. Several members of a military honor board appointed by President Cristiani to investigate military involvement in the killings recently failed to comply with the judge's summons to appear in court. Judicial authorities recently released soldiers involved in other illegal killings in 1988. [REDACTED]

Meanwhile, Chief of Staff Ponce is moving slowly on removing commanders implicated in human rights crimes. The reassignment of the 5th Brigade commander, involved in trying to cover up the murder of 10 peasants by soldiers in his command two years ago, has been repeatedly delayed. After several months of deliberations, the High Command last month reassigned Col. Roberto Staben, who has been implicated in a string of human rights incidents. [REDACTED]

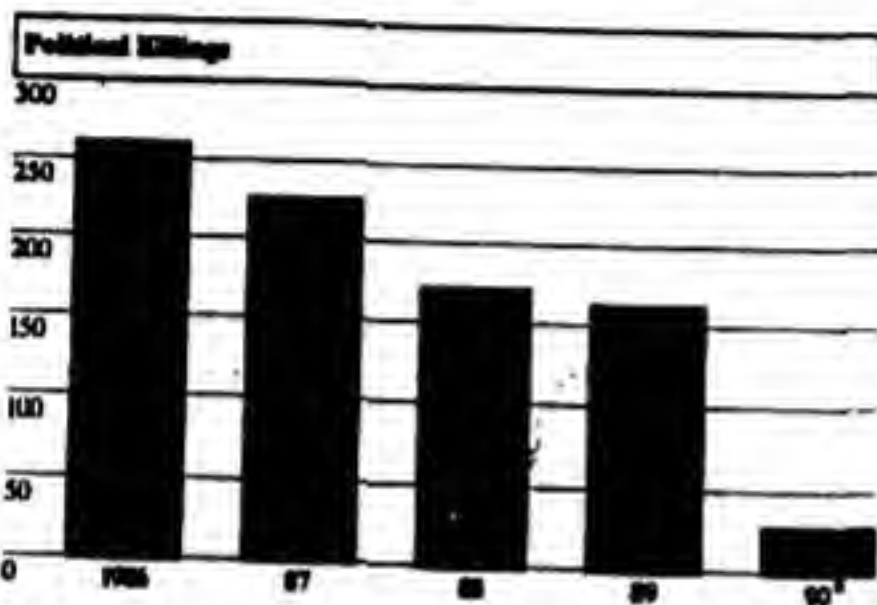
Comment: The High Command appears to appreciate the seriousness of human rights problems. But despite its assurances to senior US officials over the past several years that the military would punish offenders in a series of cases of interest to Washington, no officer has been convicted of a political murder. The release of soldiers involved in the politically motivated killings in 1988 has reinforced the perception that the military is immune from justice. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

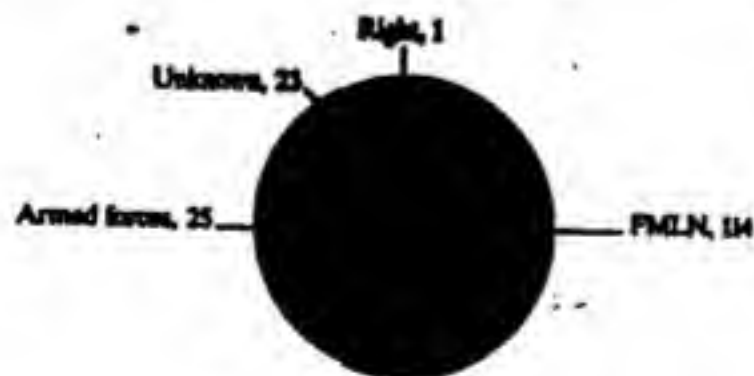
[REDACTED]

## El Salvador



\*As of March.

## Perpetrators of Political Killings in 1990



**EL SALVADOR:**

**New Rightist Plots**

*Extreme rightists are plotting to form a new death squad and oust President Cristiani; the President plans to preempt a move against him by moving to remove extremists from his government.*

Rightwing elements plan to [redacted] leftist labor leaders, students, and politicians. Roberto D'Aubuisson, a leader of the ruling ARENA party, Vice President Francisco Merino, and other wealthy Salvadorans will pay squad members and cover expenses. The hit list [redacted] would come from a former attorney general who traded information on alleged leftists for D'Aubuisson's aid in dismissing charges of corruption against him in the Legislative Assembly.

D'Aubuisson told ARENA associates he has plans to oust the government, which he claimed is being manipulated by the US.

Cristiani anticipates D'Aubuisson will try to remove him by force and plans to purge the government of D'Aubuisson loyalists. Cristiani hopes to initiate changes as soon as next week. Among those he will fire are Supreme Court President Mauricio Gutierrez Castro and Col. (Ret.) Sigifredo Ochoa, head of the government-owned electric company. The President also fears ARENA may lose support in the legislative election next March unless he improves its image by removing incompetent, corrupt officials.

Comment: Plans to form new death squads have surfaced several times over the past two years, but there is no proof any have been created. A number of disappearances and unexplained killings evidently by the right occur each year but at a greatly reduced rate from the early 1980s.

Cristiani's plan to challenge D'Aubuisson's influence may open the way for real reforms. The President's continued reluctance to name his own choice as Defense Minister, however, suggests he is not eager to confront ARENA's right wing. D'Aubuisson behaves erratically and drinks heavily, and his plots may be his usual bluster. He nonetheless remains a powerful figure whom no one seems willing to challenge directly.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

9299/

El Salvador

COUNTRY

A five-man jury in El Salvador has found Salvadoran Army Colonel Guillermo Benavides and an Army lieutenant guilty in the November 1989 murder of six Jesuit priests and two women, acquitting seven other lower-ranking defendants, according to press. The judge now has a month to pass sentence, which could range from twenty to thirty years in prison.

Comment: The verdict indicates the jury assigned little responsibility to the lower-ranking defendants who were carrying out orders when they committed the murders. Benavides' conviction is an important precedent--he is the first high ranking Salvadoran officer to be found guilty of a human rights violation--which may help convince the FMLN guerrillas that the military is no longer above the law. The less-than-sweeping verdict, however, will not immediately placate government critics, who will continue to assert that the court failed to indict senior officers whom they believe ordered the murders.

Approved for Release

NOV 1 1993



29 Nov 1980

EL SALVADOR: Growing Rightist Dominance

*The kidnapping and killing of prominent leftists in El Salvador on Thursday is the latest indication of growing rightwing dominance there.*

Five of the seven abducted leftist coalition leaders reportedly have been found dead. Despite government denials, the operation almost surely was carried out by security forces--possibly in retaliation for the brutal slaying last week of a ranking colonel and his family.

The reform programs are in danger of becoming so incidental to the counterinsurgency as to lose their impact. Last week, a leading agrarian official charged that the high violence on agricultural reform properties was part of an official campaign to destroy the political center and sabotage reform efforts.

The left, despite losses, has shifted back to attacks on military targets designed to provoke a right-wing coup, and it is making progress toward its objective.

The left will derive enormous propaganda value from these actions in its campaign to make the Salvadoran Government an international pariah. One of the victims was a former minister in the first reform junta and a highly respected national and international figure.

Approved for Release  
NOV 1981



29 Nov 1986

EL SALVADOR: Growing Rightist Ascendancy

*The kidnapping and killing of prominent leftists in El Salvador on Thursday is the latest indication of growing rightwing dominance there.*

Five of the seven abducted leftist coalition leaders reportedly have been found dead. Despite government denials, the operation almost surely was carried out by security forces--possibly in retaliation for the brutal slaying last week of a ranking colonel and his family.

The military hierarchy has temporarily put off middle-level demands that the Christian Democratic junta members be dumped, [redacted] has gained civilian acquiescence to demands for a firmer hand in the counter-insurgency effort. Defense Minister Garcia, rather than the more centrist junta member Colonel Gutierrez, now appears to be the dominant military figure.

Progressive junta member Colonel Majano is now powerless, his ouster awaiting only a propitious occasion. Majano, who recently initiated political negotiations with the extreme left, runs a high risk of assassination.

The center is increasingly a no man's land. A major labor leader, one of only a handful of surviving prominent centrists, was recently assassinated. Leftists [redacted] initiating contact [redacted] they killed him. Both the leftists and the government-connected death squads are victimizing the centrists. Government personnel continue the executions of prisoners despite a new code of conduct.

The reform programs are in danger of becoming so incidental to the counterinsurgency as to lose their impact. Last week, a leading agrarian official charged that the frequent violence occurring on agricultural reform properties was part of an official campaign to destroy the political center and sabotage reform efforts.

Despite losses, the left has shifted back to attacks on military targets designed to provoke a rightwing coup, and it is making progress toward its objective.

The left will derive enormous propaganda value from these actions in its campaign to make the Salvadoran Government an international pariah. One of the victims was a former minister in the first reform junta and a highly respected national and international figure.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
14 APR 1993

**EL SALVADOR: Reactions to Arrests**

Current investigations of rightist officials and military officers involved in kidnaping plots are likely to strengthen the government's credibility on human rights issues, but public arguments may arise if the probe widens. [REDACTED] that at least 20 civilians, military officers, and military personnel have been implicated in, and several arrested in, the criminal abductions of businessmen over the past three years. Initial public reaction to the arrests, even within conservative opposition groups and the armed forces, has been favorable. [REDACTED]

**Comment:** The government so far appears to have resisted the temptation to use these arrests to attack the rightist opposition. If the case widens to implicate additional government military and civilian personnel in other criminal or terrorist activities, however, conservative interest groups and the armed forces are likely to mount a campaign to force President Jignas to limit the scope of these investigations. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Approved for Release

NOV 1993

**THE DIRECTOR OF  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE**

**National Intelligence Council**

**10 April 1984**

**NOTE FOR: C/NIC**

**FROM: [REDACTED] NIO/LB**

**SUBJECT: Study on Salvadorean Death Squads**

**See the attached telegram from Pickering**

**I still think that we should proceed as we had decided previously to do an Interagency paper, drafted by ALA, on the Death Squads after the run-off election in El Salvador, as the results of the election should make a difference to our assessment.**

**Attachment:  
State telegram  
dated 8 April 1984**

**Approved for Release**

**NOV 1993**

[REDACTED]

13 April 1993

NOTE FOR: DDO

FROM: D/PAI

Tom -

I request your concurrence on this draft letter to The New York Times. On 2 April 1993, Anthony Lewis wrote a column (attached) alleging that the Agency withheld intelligence from Congress concerning the assassination of Archbishop Romero in El Salvador in 1980.

This draft has been coordinated with DD/OCA [REDACTED]. He accompanied me to the SSCI on 12 April, when we showed staffers that the intelligence acquired on the assassination, referred to by Lewis, was provided to the committee (in fact, probably within two weeks after the Field reported it). [REDACTED] the staffers said they would not object to our stating that the intelligence was provided to the committee.

I am also asking for the DDCI's concurrence on the draft. Then I will give it back to [REDACTED] to run by the SSCI before we send it to The New York Times later this week.

Att

[REDACTED]

CONCUR:

[REDACTED]  
Deputy Director for Operations

16 APR 1993

Date

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

OCA 90 0289  
 29 January 1990

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing Senator Leahy on Panama and El Salvador

1. On 29 January, Senator Patrick Leahy (D., VT) was briefed by the DDCI, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] of ALA in the DDCI's office. [REDACTED] was present for the briefing. Leahy will be visiting Panama and El Salvador 1-5 February. He is particularly interested in issues related to aid the US will provide both governments because he is Chairman of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee which has jurisdiction over all US aid. (C)

2. The following are the key points of the briefing.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



[REDACTED]

**EL SALVADOR**

Analyst provided update of our knowledge relating to the killings of the Jesuits. Leahy brought up report of D'Aubisson's statements about some of the priests the night of their murder. Analyst said we have no evidence linking the D'Aubisson statements to the killings. DDCI noted we could not discount a link to D'Aubisson.

Leahy asked about status of trial of accused soldiers and whether trial would continue if the military said to stop. Analyst described judicial process and its weaknesses and said that the military could stop the trial but had not done so.

Leahy asked about aftermath of FMLN offensive. Analyst described military defeat propaganda successes.

Leahy interested in intelligence prior to FMLN offensive. Analyst described our foreknowledge of attack. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Leahy asked what we knew about corruption in government particularly corruption involving US aid. Analysts described pervasive corruption but said we knew little about its impact on US aid.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Distribution:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

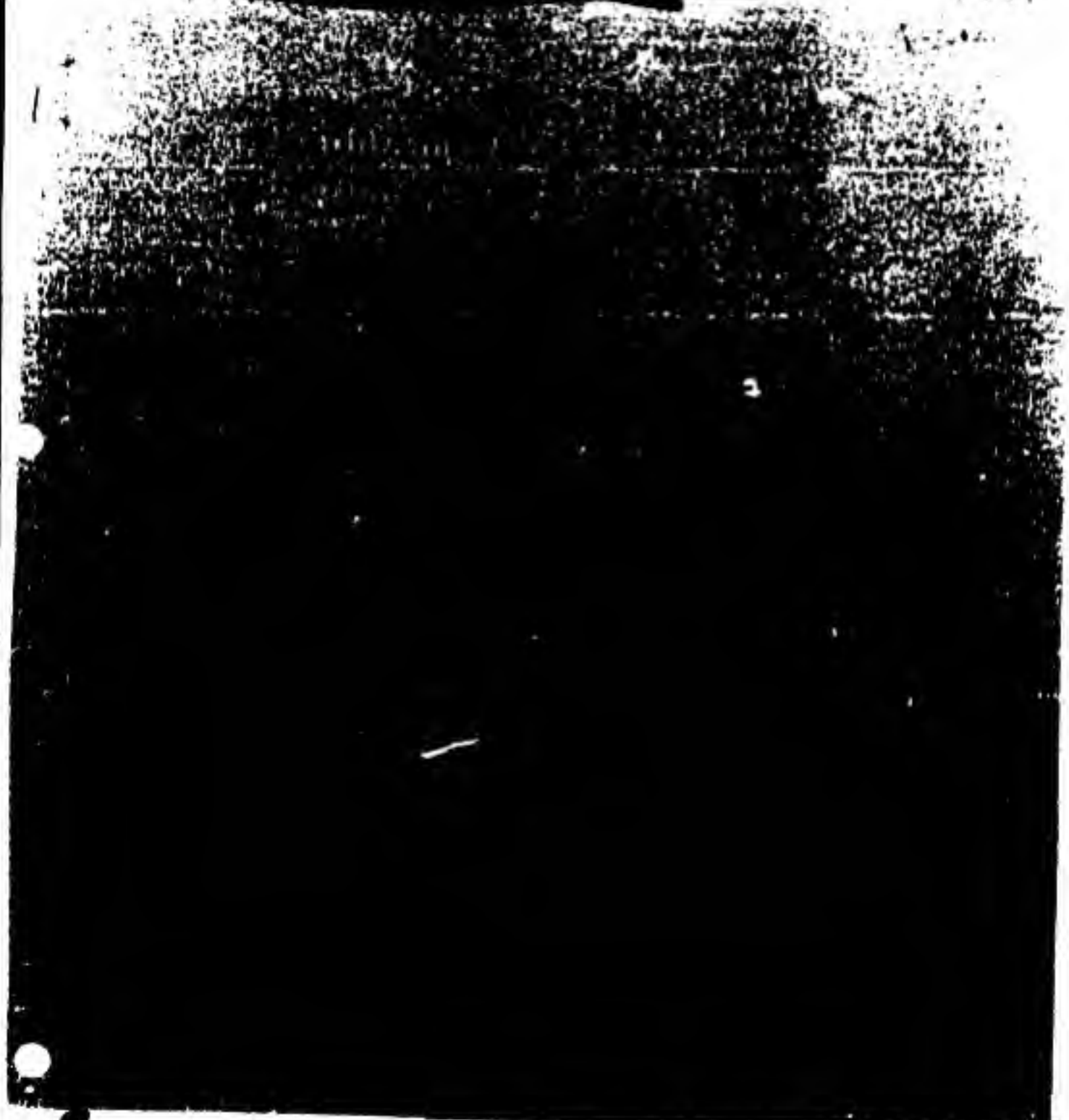
[REDACTED]



National  
Foreign  
Assessment  
Center



7/19



Approved for Release

NOV 1993

### Rightwing Terrorism

The ultraright in El Salvador has a long history of using violence as a political tool, perhaps marked most vividly by the widespread repression and murder of campesinos following the unsuccessful peasant rebellion in 1932. In the 1960s, a surge of political activity among peasants and urban workers inspired the creation of many new rightwing organizations, both official and clandestine.

One such government-sponsored group--the National Democratic Organization (ORDEN)--was comprised of tens of thousands of conservative rural peasants and served as a tool of the landed elites. It included many former armed forces personnel who were part of the nation's reserve force, the Territorial Service. ORDEN served principally as an intelligence-gathering organization--identifying real or suspected enemies of the regime--but it also occasionally took direct action against them.

Augmenting the semiofficial organizations were a variety of secret vigilante groups that have faded in and out of existence. Traditionally, rightwing death squads have included civilian mercenaries, idealists tied to particular wealthy elites, and active and retired security force personnel. Given the impunity with which death squads continue to operate today, it is clear that security force personnel continue to cooperate with and participate in vigilante terror.

### Leadership and Organization

Information on the leadership and organization of rightwing terrorist groups is sketchy. A small group of wealthy Salvadorans living in Miami, however, is believed to be behind the kidnaping and intimidation of businessmen who have shown sympathy for the civil-military government or for US policy in El Salvador. These individuals also may have ordered the assassinations of the two US AFL-CIO representatives in January. Tied to this group of wealthy expatriates are businessmen in El Salvador who belong to the Broad National Front, headed by Haier D'Aubuisson and a young ultraconservative

17 April 1981

[REDACTED]

The extreme right wing therefore has limited need for external support, given its financing by millionaire exiles. The terror squads use a broad range of side arms, machine pistols, and rifles that are readily available on the regional black market and in the United States. The involvement of security force personnel in the rightist terrorism ensures a further supply of arms and license to use them. For example, the March attack on the Nicaraguan Embassy in San Salvador by assailants using RPG-2 rockets followed the capture of a substantial supply of these weapons by government troops.

Membership in rightwing terrorist groups probably approaches several hundred, but our information in this area is limited. Security force personnel operate on their own or are employed in an off-duty capacity by civilians. Mercenaries outside armed forces ranks are also utilized.

The rumor that foreign personnel--usually Nicaraguans or Guatemalans--are active in rightwing activities is heard frequently, but there is little hard evidence. Following Somoza's overthrow, some 1,300 Nicaraguan National Guard troops arrived in El Salvador, the vast majority of whom were enlisted personnel. [REDACTED] suggested a large number of them were to be integrated into the Salvadoran armed forces, but this was never confirmed and the numbers actually integrated were probably quite modest. Many others may have been recruited into the private guard forces of the elite. Members of either group could easily be involved in rightwing violence, but it is impossible to estimate numbers accurately.

[REDACTED] also constantly charge that Guatemalan paramilitary forces are active in El Salvador. Contacts and consultations between rightwing Salvadoran and Guatemalan officials do occur--and some civilian terrorist personnel may have trained in Guatemala with like-minded organizations--but there is no persuasive evidence that significant assistance has been given. It seems extremely unlikely that the Guatemalan Government would have authorized the dispatch to El Salvador of government personnel, in mufti or otherwise, under prevailing conditions.

17 April 1981

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Nevertheless, even prior to the self-exile of El Salvador's conservative economic elite, there were frequent contacts between hardlining businessmen in Guatemala and El Salvador and some soliciting of funds from the Guatemalan brethren. The travels of Major D'Aubuisson attest to continuing contacts, [REDACTED] have discussed the possibility of providing funds or men to the Salvadoran right wing. Although the current level of rightwing activities in El Salvador could easily be maintained without resort to outside aid, in the event of a major Salvadoran crisis a segment of the Guatemalan right would probably provide concrete assistance if asked.

[REDACTED]

17 April 1981

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

wealthy landowners and as a coordinator of the right-wing death squads that have murdered several thousand suspected leftists and leftist sympathizers during the past year.

Although relatively intelligent, D'Aubuisson is also egocentric and reckless. He favors physically eliminating the leftist opposition, which he defines as anyone not supportive of the traditional status quo. His hatred of those he suspects of leftist sympathies led him to visit the United States last spring to condemn the Carter administration's policy toward El Salvador. After his US visa was canceled, D'Aubuisson traveled throughout Latin America seeking military and political support for his Broad National Front--an ultra-conservative group of wealthy Salvadorans.

D'Aubuisson is funded by members of the extreme rightwing Salvadoran elite, most of whom now live in Guatemala and the United States. Though few in number, these wealthy expatriates have reportedly spent millions of dollars to support D'Aubuisson and his followers in their efforts to overthrow the present junta and return the country to rightwing military rule.

D'Aubuisson's personal following is limited to a handful of wealthy civilians and some military officers, many of whom are not on active duty. His influence in the military has waned over the past year, as many of his former colleagues in the junior officer corps look to more senior officers for leadership.

Nevertheless, D'Aubuisson could play a spoiler role by continuing to encourage rightwing terrorists--many of whom are enlisted personnel in the security forces--and by issuing inflammatory declarations against the junta and those sympathetic to reform. D'Aubuisson's penchant for action is underscored by his sponsorship of several unsuccessful efforts during the past year. His efforts to turn back the clock and initiate an all-out civil war against the left could succeed if he manages to convince a majority of the officer corps that the new US administration would accept an ouster of the Christian Democrats from the government.

[REDACTED]

17 April 1981

[REDACTED]



EL SALVADOR: THE RIGHT WING

The right in El Salvador is broad by almost any definition. Conservative tendencies run wide and deep in the military, the business community, and beyond. The extreme right wing, however, which currently favors a coup d'etat and unrestricted use of vigilante groups against suspected leftists, is smaller.

The rightist tendency in the armed forces is predominant. Nearly three-fourths of the officers are decidedly conservative, and Defense Minister Garcia--the strongman in the government--represents a consensus that the lasting solution to the extreme leftist problem should be military rather than political. The officers in the armed forces who now favor a rightwing coup are relatively few consisting of a small clique of junior- and middle-grade officers who are allied with some far-right civilians and retired military officers.

The officers on the extreme right are being held in check by the more pragmatic high command, which represents the mainstream of military thinking. The extreme-right clique does not have a single senior active-duty officer as its leader. It had previously regarded Defense Minister Garcia as its unofficial chief, but the extremists have recently grumbled about his political compromises with the Christian Democrats. National Guard Chief Vides Casanova is also sought after as a potential coup leader, but he too has rejected the extremists' overtures, at least for the time being.

The Role of Roberto D'Aubuisson

Former Army Major Roberto D'Aubuisson has been an articulate and charismatic spokesman for the far right in El Salvador since leaving active service after the reformist coup on 15 October 1979. A protégé of "Chele" Medrano, the ultrarightist former chief of the National Guard, D'Aubuisson has served as principal henchman for

17 April 1981



Directorate of  
Intelligence

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# Terrorism Review [REDACTED]

11/10/93

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

35

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

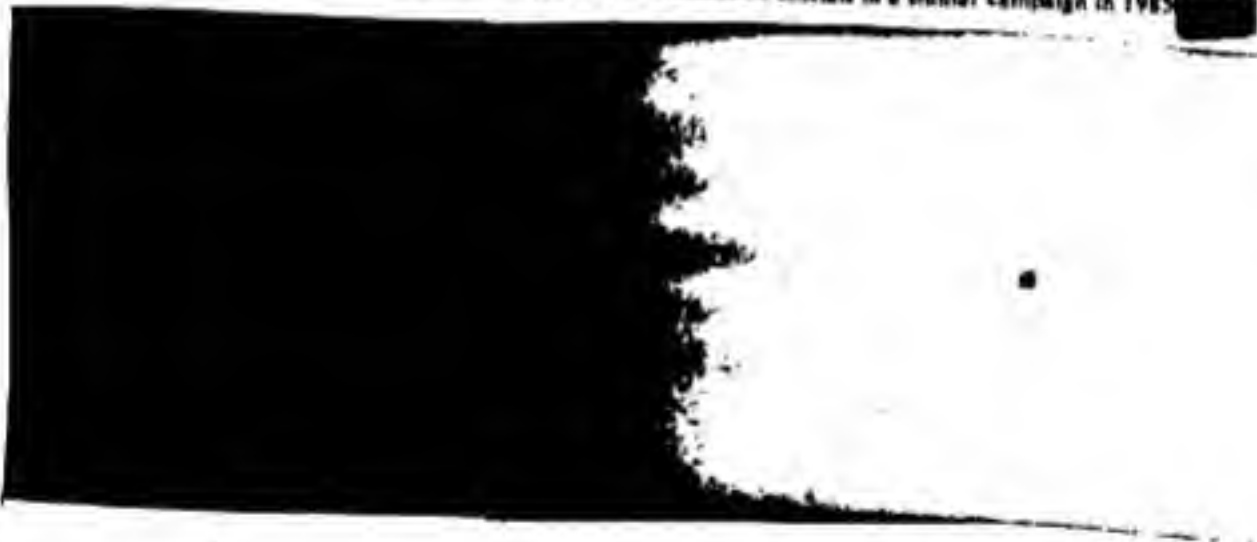


Latin America

El Salvador

#### Guerillas Kidnap Three Mayors

Leftist guerrillas of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) kidnaped three mayors in various parts of El Salvador in early January. The abductions were part of the guerrillas' announced subversive campaign known as "Heroic January: Farabundo Martí Lives." These kidnappings may have been an attempt to intimidate local mayors, and the group may try more such kidnappings. The FMLN abducted 27 smalltown officials in a similar campaign in 1985.



## El Salvador: Guerrilla Use of Mine Warfare

The insurgents' recent proposal to halt mine warfare if the Army will halt its use of artillery and aerial bombing highlights a guerrilla tactic that has inflicted heavy casualties on both military personnel and civilians. Hard hit by declining manpower and facing an increasingly effective Army, the rebels over the past two years have come to rely less on pitched battles and more on landmines to prolong the war and make it costly to the government. Army countermeasures have had only limited success, although a government propaganda campaign has generated criticism of the guerrillas. Since San Salvador has rejected the proposal, the insurgents almost certainly will continue to use mining, and both government and noncombat civilian casualties are likely to mount.

As Army capabilities have grown and their own fortunes have ebbed, the Salvadoran guerrillas have resorted increasingly to the use of landmines. These weapons offer a relatively cheap, low-risk, and efficient way to inflict casualties on the armed forces.

The guerrillas deploy landmines both offensively and defensively with devastating effect.

Indicates command-detonated mines frequently are used in ambushes to kill or maim government personnel and to damage military vehicles. Pressure-detonated mines are concealed around guerrilla encampments to prevent or impede government attacks or infiltration. When in retreat, guerrillas may place either type along likely avenues of approach to slow or disrupt advancing government forces. Indicates the insurgents also are making greater use of "bouncing betty" mines, which are propelled upward about waist high before exploding, thereby increasing their

destructive potential. One version apparently has a blast range of 40 to 50 meters and may prove effective even against low-flying helicopters.

### High Casualties

The guerrillas' expansion of mine warfare has taken an increasingly heavy toll on both military personnel and civilians. Indicates that mines accounted for nearly two-thirds of all military casualties in 1986—1,753 out of 2,846—compared to about one-third in 1985 and a mere 65 out of 2,508 killed and wounded in 1984. Indicates that government mine casualties during the first two weeks of "Operation Monterrosa"—initiated on 20 May—were high and that at least one elite battalion was withdrawn from the field because of losses. Medical care required for those wounded by mines is expensive and further strains the government's dwindling economic resources. In addition, guerrilla mines—often placed indiscriminately near populated areas—killed at least 45 civilians and wounded 162 in 1986.

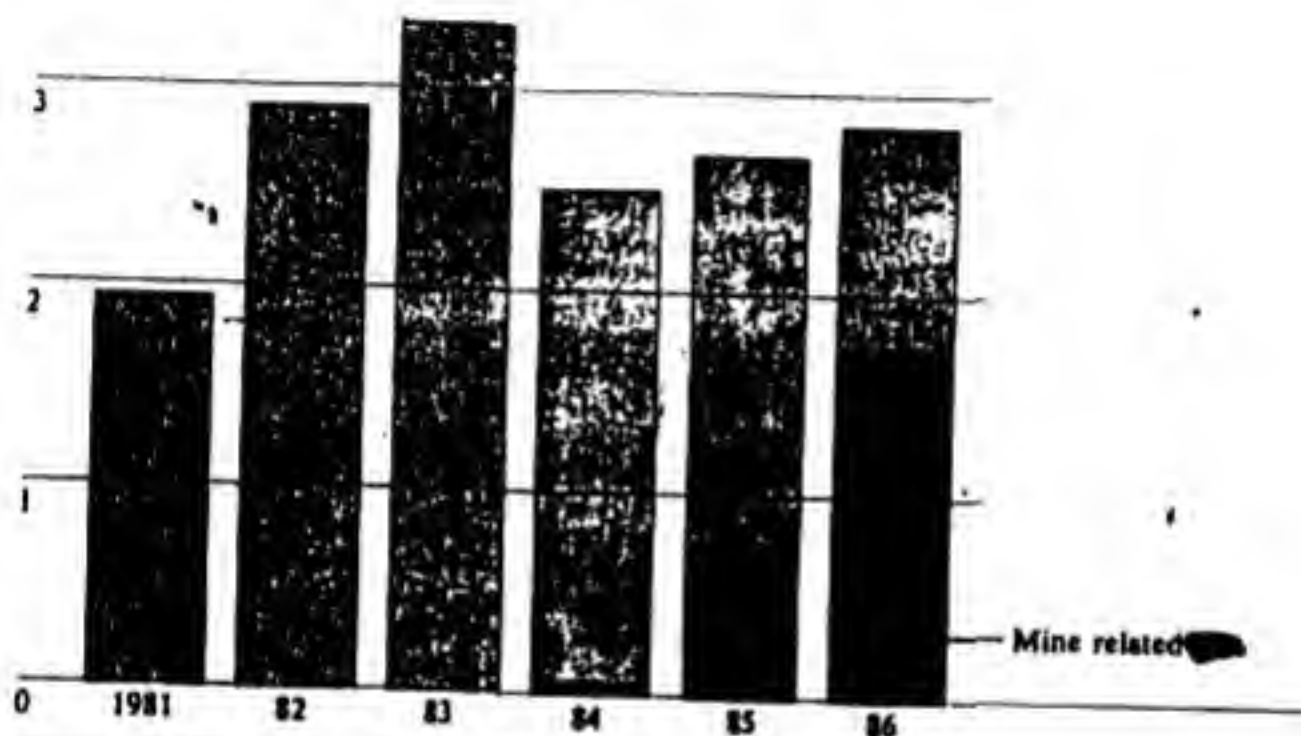
Last March, several employees of the International Red Cross were injured by a guerrilla mine planted in the main street of a small village in Morazan Department.

that the Army, for its part, employs mines sparingly and, as a matter of policy, avoids use of unrecoverable devices. Army mines accounted for only one civilian death in all of 1986.

## El Salvador: Total Military Casualties, 1981-86

Thousand

4



Data for losses due to mines available 1984-86 only.

31 0000 2 00

### Sources of Supply

The insurgents obtain explosives and other components from a variety of sources. Many landmines are homemade, using commonplace, locally available ingredients, such as chemical fertilizer for the explosive agent and plastic irrigation piping for the casing/shrapnel. However, they also receive some materials and other ingredients from Nicaragua and other outside

sources. Moreover, the guerrillas apparently are sometimes able to detect and steal the Army's mines.

### Government Countermeasures

The high casualty figures suggest that government countermeasures are achieving only modest success. The receipt of new mine detectors in May

Government poster shows  
innocent victim of FMLN  
mines and her human  
rights

# VICTIMA INOCENTE DE MINAS DEL FMLN



## ¿Y SUS DERECHOS HUMANOS?



[REDACTED]

1986 boosted Army morale, but the guerrillas have been able to thwart them either by constructing smaller devices, reducing the number of metal components, or burying the mines deeper [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that seasoned Salvadoran troops discover more landmines through visual observation than with the detectors. Tactical developments—moving away from predictable deployment patterns and toward greater use of small-unit tactics and irregular maneuver and advancement routes on the part of larger units—make the Army somewhat less vulnerable to established minefields. Weather also can be used to the government's advantage, as heavy rains—common in the region from June until September—often cause the mines to short-circuit [REDACTED]

The government also has taken the propaganda initiative, with considerable success. Posters depicting a young girl who lost a leg to a guerrilla mine greet travelers arriving at San Salvador's international airport. Recent international press items have publicized the situation, and the Catholic Church and some human rights organizations—those not

functioning as insurgent front groups—are increasingly vocal in condemning civilian casualties from guerrilla mines [REDACTED]

#### Prospects

The guerrillas' offer to forgo mine warfare—a vital, low-cost element of their "protracted popular war" strategy—suggests they recognize the damage to their interests and are being hurt badly by the Army's superior firepower. The government is unlikely to reconsider its rejection of the proposal in the near term, however, and the rebels almost certainly will continue to rely heavily on mining, resulting in mounting casualties among civilians as well as military personnel [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

the  
a  
en  
la  
re,  
ob  
as  
con  
in L  
of p  
proq  
his c  
ques  
econ  
pres  
remo  
Esqui  
NF I

Despit  
uocer  
dicial  
hange  
my req  
inance  
edice R  
ut upl

Directorate of  
Intelligence

**Latin America  
Review**

15 May 1990

Approved for Release  
NOV 1993

## El Salvador: Cleaning Up the Military

Public and internal criticism of the military's image and effectiveness has intensified since the insurgent offensive last November, increasing pressure on the High Command to confront human rights abuses, corruption, and incompetence in the officer corps. Thus far, reform efforts have focused principally on removing some members of the military academy class—or *tanda*—of 1966, which holds many senior leadership positions. Although this class—known as the *Tendones* because of its large size—assumed its positions only last year, critics, including the government, the US Embassy, and junior officers, already are calling for the dismissal of many class members from their command posts. In April, the High Command transferred two long-criticized *Tendones* members, but failed to make other anticipated changes, including the long-awaited promotion of Chief of Staff Ponce—a *Tendones* member generally regarded as a reformer—to Minister of Defense.

### The Defense Attache Dilemma

Over the years, the military has taken care of undesirable elements in the officer corps by "selling" them to well-paid defense attache jobs, where they can preserve their positions and pursue their own business. The "sellers" typically are officers accused of human rights abuses or corruption who are considered politically unelectable by civil authorities or the Army High Command. [redacted] indicates that the class of 1966 supported the firing of the following senior officers because they stood in the way of ambitious *Tendones* members who wanted to move up:

- Col. Denis Moran, now the defense attache in Guatemala, has also filled attache positions in Washington and Colombia. In 1979 he [redacted] directed a rightist terrorist group called the White Warriors Union. He headed the National Guard intelligence section in the early 1980s, when it was linked to death squad activities, and was implicated in

the murders of three land reform experts in a San Salvador hotel in 1981.

- Gen. Adolfo Blandon serves as defense attache in Washington following his removal as Chief of Staff last year. [redacted]

- Col. Oscar Rodolfo Campos Araya is the defense attache in Brazil and has also served in Washington. While commanding the 1st Brigade, [redacted] blocked an investigation into alleged human rights abuses by his company. [redacted]

### The *Tendones*'s Dilemma

More recently, the *Tendones* has resisted cleaning up the military. [redacted] indicates that the class of 1966 does not want to see its preeminence curbed by reforms that place merit and accountability above loyalty and tradition—the values emphasized by the *tanda* system. Chief of Staff Ponce, although aware that disgruntled junior officers are demanding wholesale changes, has been reluctant to defy class unity and purge the *Tendones*. Ponce also has not complied with a request from President Cristiani late last year, [redacted] to remove certain officers.

Ponce, who repeatedly tells US officials he believes reform is desirable, has responded to critics pressing for change by stressing the need to maintain the discipline of the officer corps during the war. [redacted] Ponce wants to avoid the perception of caving in to the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), which is demanding the dismantling of the *Tendones* as part of any political settlement. [redacted]

[REDACTED] that Ponce believes he can control junior officer discontent. [REDACTED]

Nevertheless, the Chief of Staff has demonstrated his willingness to make some concessions by "sailing" four Tardona members to defense attaché positions:

- Col. Natividad Jesus Caceres now serves as the defense attaché in Chile after being removed from his command post last year on charges of corruption, brutality, extortion, and an armed confrontation last year with the US Ambassador.
- Col. Carlos Mauricio Guzman Aguilera was recently reassigned as the defense attaché in Costa Rica after an investigation—ordered last fall by Cristiani—of allegations of incompetence and corruption. He previously headed the National Police and the National Intelligence Directorate.
- Col. Roberto Staben, a military detachment commander, has been appointed attaché in Honduras. Although he is reputed to be an effective commander, he had been exiled to an area of little combat activity because of allegations of a pattern of abuses of authority, human rights violations, and corruption over a long period, including earlier involvement in a kidnapping ring.
- Col. Humberto Villalta, commander of the Navy, has been appointed attaché in Spain. Last fall Cristiani ordered Ponce to investigate Villalta on charges of corruption, specifically of using Navy fuel to power his shrimp boats. [REDACTED]

Other long-discounted commanders escaped transfer in the most recent series of changes, but [REDACTED] pressure continues to build for their removal.

- Col. Jose Emilio Chavez Caceres commands the 5th Brigade. He is suspected of involvement in a possible coverup of an investigation after his troops executed 10 peasants suspected of FMLN affiliations last year.

- Col. Hector Hariberto Hernandez was reassigned early this year to command the 6th Brigade, a move that angered critics demanding his placement in a noncommand position. He previously had directed the Treasury Police, where he [REDACTED] was widely disliked because of incompetence and corruption. [REDACTED]

#### Outlook

Junior officers complained directly to the President last year about the incompetence and corruption of many Tardona members, and the failure to make changes faster is likely to encourage more unhappiness in junior officer ranks. These officers, increasingly concerned about their own progress upward, probably will be especially disappointed over the repeated delay in promoting Ponce to Minister of Defense—a move that would trigger advancement of lower academy classes. The ouster of senior commanders, in our view, would be an important step toward weakening the inside tradition and paving the way for a system of promotions and assignments based on merit rather than clan loyalties. Moreover, we believe such a reform would go a long way toward improving the effectiveness of the military and making it more responsive to civil authority. The precedent also could preempt problems with the next large class, the class of 1973, whose members were recently promoted to lieutenant colonel. [REDACTED]

**El Salvador Chronology**

March - April 1990

**1 March**

Air, naval, and ground forces launch an operation on the southeastern coast to deny logistic resupply to the FMLN before the inauguration of the new government in Managua.

**1 March**

Reports the FMLN intends to attack a commercial airliner with surface-to-air missiles.

**1 March**

Insurgents attack a military helicopter carrying Attorney General Colorado to the exhaustion of five civilians killed in a restaurant some last month. One person is killed, and nine of the 11 on board are wounded.

The office of the Christian Committee for the Displaced reopens three months after closing.

The Armed Forces announce plans for continued nationwide offensive operations to interdict FMLN logistic resupply operations and protect the country's economic infrastructure. @ 107

**7 March**

Reports the rebels will temporarily suspend logistic operations in the region of the Southern Union Department, because of the Armed Forces presence in the area.

**8 March**

A civilian jury convicts 36 civil defense members for the rape and massacre of 23 peasants in 1982.

Rebels bomb several businesses and engage the military in a few small-scale skirmishes around San Salvador.

**9 March**

Some 150 rebels attack a coffee plant in Union Department, killing four soldiers and wounding six.

At least 10 rebels are killed during an 18-hour hour attack against Chirido Barrios in northern San Miguel. The attack force is estimated at 250 to 300.



13 March

A group of insurgents barricade roads into [redacted] in Usulután Department and hold the town hostage for five hours, leaving when Air Force helicopters fly over the area. [redacted]

The FMLN unveils a series of unilateral steps it will initiate on 16 March to seek a peaceful solution to the war, including suspending arms embargo operations and halting assassination attempts against civilian officials. [redacted]

14 March

Suspected FMLN members attack and wound an Air Force pilot and his two brothers outside their home in San Salvador. [redacted]

15 March

A judge imprisons two Army sergeants accused of murder and rape. [redacted]

A group of former Army soldiers asks the Legislative Assembly to approve an amnesty for as many as 300 soldiers implicated in crimes "committed in the line of duty." [redacted]

16 March

A Honduran Army patrol surveilling a suspected FMLN base camp discovers a cache of six field expedient mines, one rifle grenade, wiring material for booby traps, and FMLN propaganda documents. [redacted]

The FMLN attacks 3rd Military Department soldiers patrolling near a displaced persons camp in Chiriquí Department. [redacted]

Judge Zamora, the head of the investigation into the Jesuit murders on 16 November 1989, meets for the first time with Colonel Rivas, the director of the Special Investigations Unit. [redacted]

18 March

The FMLN destroys electrical posts and burns two buses, violating its suspension of sabotage operations and attacks against civilians. [redacted]

19 March

The FMLN conducts three drive-by shootings, one against the Guatemalan Embassy in San Salvador, killing two policemen and wounding two civilians. [redacted]

20 March

An FMLN delegation meets with Venezuelan President Perez and reportedly seeks his assistance in achieving peace in El Salvador. [redacted]

The FMLN attacks the Civil Defense post at San Francisco (aj) Monte, Chiriquí Department, killing four soldiers, and wounding five. [redacted]



21 March

Rebel Infantry Brigade members engage rebels in the area of Las Vegas, Chalatenango Department for over 11 hours. Some 12 insurgents are killed, and 13 soldiers are wounded. After the battle, two soldiers are killed and four wounded during an ambush of the land evacuation.

22 March

Press reports indicate El Salvador has unilaterally decided to suspend the transit of Nicaraguan trucks or containers transporting merchandise through Salvadoran territory.

The son-in-law of the Air Force commander, Gen. Rafael Villamariona, is seriously wounded during a kidnapping attempt in San Salvador.

24 March

Between 5,000 and 7,000 people, many of them foreigners, attend a march commemorating the 10th anniversary of Archbishop Romero's assassination.

26 March

A member [redacted] says urban guerrillas are discussing plans to liberate Xela in El Salvador.

Two 5th Brigade soldiers and a national policeman, all explosives experts, are killed while trying to deactivate a mine.

27 March

The National Unity of Salvadoran Workers, the largest Marxist labor umbrella organization, suspends its labor functions, which was closed and occupied by members of the 1st brigade on 17 November 1989.

The government's Human Rights Commission completes a preliminary investigation into the killings of Efraim and Cristina Cabrera on 30 March by uniformed soldiers, who allegedly also robbed and raped other family members.

28 March

Seven civil defense members are convicted for the murders and robbery of four people in Sonsonate Department in 1984.

A 6th Military Detachment sergeant is convicted of the murders of two Guatemalan businessmen traveling on the Pan-American Highway in 1988.

A Signal Training Center patrol detects a group of insurgents moving toward the Presidential Palace, apparently to launch a homegrown attack. The FMLN fires a light antitank weapon in the resulting firefight.

29 March

President Cristiani begins a three-day visit to Venezuela.



Directorate of  
Intelligence



(4)



## Terrorism Review

23 August 1990

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



19

Several have been assassinated by the FMLN; in late July, for example, a Justice of the Peace whose son is a military officer was killed by guerrillas. Others have resigned rather than confront the military. Moreover, the shortage of attorneys, difficulties in getting citizens to serve as jurors, and the reluctance of witnesses to testify hinder the expeditious processing of cases.

Efforts to reform the judicial system have made no discernible progress. In the San Sebastian case, for example, the judge disallowed evidence gathered by the Special Investigative Unit, a US-funded criminal investigative unit created in 1985. Furthermore, in selecting the judge who ultimately decided the kidnapping case, the Supreme Court bypassed the newly created, supposedly nonpartisan council it is required by law to consult when transferring or appointing judges.

#### Role in Peace Negotiations

Armed forces impunity has proved to be a major sticking point in negotiations between San Salvador and the guerrillas. In July, the FMLN rejected a government reform proposal that called for trials in eight cases, including four allegedly committed by rebels, a general amnesty for officers accused of human rights violations, the rebels, and political prisoners, and establishing a military tribunal to punish actions that obstruct the administration of justice. Instead, the guerrillas

demand that San Salvador prosecute four key cases, including the 1980 assassination of Archbishop Romero and the 1989 Jesuit murders, and purge the armed forces of officers involved in human rights violations. The negotiations in July ended with a broad human rights agreement that still did not address the overarching issue of military impunity.

As the most recent round of talks, started on 18 August, military reform issues continued to cause problems. The rebels, calling impunity the root of judicial ineffectiveness, presented a new, more hardline proposal, demanding the investigation of all murders and disappearances since 1979 and the purging of all corrupt officers as a preliminary step toward the dissolution of the Army. The government has rejected the demands as unreasonable.

#### Outlook

The issue of military impunity will continue to diminish the chances of an agreement on armed forces' reform—a prerequisite for a cease-fire—in the near term. Although government and military officials give lip service to the need for judicial reform and the end of impunity, the chance of military accountability is likely to persist indefinitely.

**Latin America  
Review**

24 August 1993

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

## El Salvador: The Issue of Military Impunity

The recent acquittal by Salvadoran courts of several military defendants charged in three longstanding human rights cases indicates [redacted] that the judiciary remains unwilling to confront the armed forces. Despite various reform measures implemented over the past year, [redacted] suggests that corruption, incompetence, intimidation, and archaic procedures continue to hamstring the judicial system. In recent rounds of government-rebel talks, the Faribundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) has demanded an end to military immunity from prosecution as part of military and judicial reform packages that are to be negotiated prior to a cease-fire. [redacted]

### Lack of Accountability

Having largely run the country until 1984, the Salvadoran military has no tradition of accountability to civilians. [redacted] indicates the officer corps is a cohesive and insular group with strong, lifelong loyalties, particularly to fellow members of each graduation class, or *cohort*. As a result, officers rarely cooperate in the prosecution of their colleagues. For their part, judges, fearing reprisals, frequently decline to arraign members of the armed forces. No senior military officer accused of human rights violations has ever been brought to trial. Recent court actions in three major cases involving military personnel accused of human rights abuses are illustrative of the problem. [redacted]

**The Kidnapping Ring.** From 1982 to 1986, a group of retired and active-duty military officers and rightwing civilians kidnapped at least five wealthy Salvadorans, collecting several million dollars in ransom. In 1986, the authorities arrested four officers who belonged to the ring, including one member of the powerful *Tendones*—the military class of 1966 which now holds many command positions—who was released shortly afterward due to insufficient evidence; arrest orders were filed against five others, including two *Tendones* members who fled the country. [redacted] shows the case has been plagued by judicial irregularities and suspicions of corruption. In April, the

presiding judge, who had been assigned to the case only a month earlier, dropped the charges and issued orders against all but two of the eight remaining defendants on the grounds of insufficient evidence. Despite a public plea from President Cristiani and the prosecutor's advice to appeal, the Attorney General declined to do so, generating rumors that he had cut a deal with the other defendants. [redacted]

**The San Sebastián Murders.** In September 1983, five officers and seven enlisted men allegedly executed 10 persons suspected of involvement with the FMLN. Although the Army initially attempted a coverup, the case caught the attention of US officials who strongly urged—in direct talks with then-President Duarte and the Armed Forces Chief of Staff—that the killings be vigorously investigated. Following an inquiry—with US technical assistance—a judge concluded in March 1989 that sufficient evidence existed to arrest the suspects. In May, over a year after the arraignment, another judge dropped the charges against 11 of the defendants despite trial statements that [redacted] provided compelling proof of the guilt of all of the accused. Trial proceedings were ordered against the highest ranking officer, an up-from-the-ranks major without powerful classmates to protect him. [redacted]

**The Michael Elias Murder.** In 1982, a group of soldiers killed a US citizen they suspected of serving as a mercenary for the guerrillas. Trial proceedings against the three enlisted men, ordered in 1984, were not completed until June 1990. The courts convicted only one of the three, concluding that shots fired by the other two had not been fatal. [redacted]

### Problems in the Judicial System

The military's immunity from civilian authority is due, in part, to the weakness of the judicial system. Court officers enjoy no police protection and live in fear of retributions from both the right and the left. [redacted]





Directorate of  
Intelligence

4M  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# Latin America Review

7 September 1953

Approved for Release

NOV 1953



**El Salvador**

**Military Human Rights Office Flawed**

The Salvadoran Armed Forces Human Rights Office, established earlier this year to respond to charges of military human rights violations, remains overworked and understaffed, and its investigations may be biased by internal military manipulation.

The office is the first organization within the military charged with overseeing the armed forces' conduct on human rights, but the failure of the High Command to allocate sufficient resources to the project raises doubts about the military's resolve to investigate itself. The office can adequately carry out its task of responding to inquiries from national and international organizations and embassies, but its investigative responsibility has fallen to junior officers who do not have the influence, experience, or resources to investigate violations thoroughly. Moreover, because the officers conducting the investigations usually hail from the same units as the alleged perpetrators, unbiased handling of their cases—and independence from unit commanders—cannot be guaranteed.



Directorate of  
Intelligence

**Latin America  
Review**

**3 April 1991**

Approved for Release  
NOV 1993

33D  
AO

## El Salvador: Examining Foreign Relations

Since taking office in June 1989, the Cristiani government has had as the centerpiece of its foreign policy the maintenance of good relations with Washington. While US prodding on human rights has made the road bumpy at times, San Salvador appears to recognize that improved performance in this area is a prerequisite for international respectability and its broader goal of diversifying sources of economic aid. In addition, the Cristiani government has worked to cultivate closer relations with other Central American countries, winning their collective endorsement for a negotiated settlement to El Salvador's 11-year-old civil war. Nevertheless, human rights problems and only partial success in shedding the ruling rightwing ARENA party's reputation for repression have undermined the government's ability to garner credibility, especially in Europe where the government is hoping to obtain additional aid.

### Background

Before the election of Jose Napoleón Duarte in 1984, El Salvador's poor human rights record repeatedly hampered relations with Washington, sparking numerous interruptions in the flow of US aid, which had been going to San Salvador since the 1930s. In 1977, the military regime of Gen. Carlos Romero rejected US aid when Washington sought to link disbursements to compliance with human rights rules; assistance was restored when Romero was overthrown in 1979. The murder of four US churchwomen in 1980 prompted Washington to suspend aid pending investigation of the incident, but the launching of a rebel "final offensive" in January 1981 prompted a renewal of assistance. Military aid continued to flow until the partial suspension of 1991 funding—an outgrowth of the government's failure to investigate thoroughly the November 1989 murders of six Jesuit priests.

Duarte's election as the first popularly chosen president in over 50 years stabilized ties to Washington. San Salvador under Duarte increasingly turned to the United States to help prevent a rebel victory as the civil conflict intensified. Well-known and respected in Washington,

the US-educated Duarte successfully attracted support for high levels of aid and a US commitment to guide the development of democracy in El Salvador.

Relations with other countries were given a lower priority during the Duarte years, although El Salvador participated in regional peace efforts and took some measures to improve its international image and secure aid. San Salvador harshly condemned the Sandinistas in Nicaragua for supporting the FMLN guerrillas, but maintained diplomatic relations with Managua. In August 1987, El Salvador and the four other Central American governments signed the Esquipulas II accord, calling for the cessation of external aid to insurgencies and peace talks between governments and rebel forces. Direct talks with Honduras during this time failed to resolve the historical boundary demarcation dispute between the countries. Outside the region, Duarte persuaded the Christian Democratic West German Government to reinstate aid that had been discontinued earlier as a result of Salvador's poor human rights record. In 1988, the government received assistance from Japan for the first time to continue reconstruction efforts after the 1986 earthquake.

### Foreign Policy Under Cristiani

The Cristiani administration has worked hard to improve El Salvador's image abroad while weathering a number of setbacks. Initially the President had to deal with perceptions that his policies would closely mirror the ruling ARENA party's poor record on human rights and socioeconomic reform issues. Salvadorean diplomats were just beginning to get a hearing in foreign capitals when the government, in response to the November 1989 guerrilla offensive, began a crackdown on organized churches that the military alleged were helping the rebels. The revelation a few weeks later that the Jesuit murders had been carried out by a military unit struck another blow to Salvadorean credibility abroad from which the Cristiani government has not yet recovered.

Events in El Salvador in 1989 especially clouded relations with Washington, and placed the continuation of US aid into question. The military's slow progress in repelling the FMLN offensive in November 1989, and its role in the Jesuit murders raised concerns about the military's conduct of the war and continued death-squad activity. Disbursement of some \$42.5 million in military aid for 1991 is partially pegged to progress in investigating the Jesuit murders. At the same time, US criticism of the government's handling of the case has aggravated Salvadoran resentment of perceived US intrusion into domestic affairs; some government and military officials reportedly have reservations concerning San Salvador's relations with the United States. Despite these frictions, however, we believe that even professed nationalists such as ARENA founder Roberto D'Aubuisson recognize that scrutiny by Washington is the necessary price for vital US assistance.

Since taking office, Cristiani has tried to cultivate good relations with his Central American neighbors, seeking their support in reaching a political settlement to El Salvador's civil war. Even when Nicaragua's former Sandinista regime sent surface-to-air missiles to the FMLN in late 1989, San Salvador's reaction—suspending diplomatic and commercial relations—was relatively mild. Although the Sandinistas' assistance to the rebels continued after their 1990 electoral defeat, suggests Cristiani has been reluctant to confront the new Nicaraguan administration on the issue. Meanwhile, the longstanding land and maritime dispute with Honduras continues to fester, but has been referred to the International Court of Justice. Hearings on the dispute, centering on islands in the Gulf of Fonseca and the boundary between the two countries, are scheduled to begin in April. Although the boundary question remains a highly emotional issue for both countries, bilateral relations have been cordial and both governments are intent on preventing violent clashes.

San Salvador has begun efforts to end its almost total dependence on Washington—US aid provides almost 50 percent of El Salvador's budget. A successful insurgent public relations effort, which reinforces the impression of a reactionary rightwing government, still receives significant international support and weakens the loss

experienced Salvadoran Government's ability to present its case. Foreign Minister Manuel Pineda Casero has traveled to several West European countries this year to discuss the economic situation, elections, and negotiations. The President and Vice President Merino have visited Taiwan, seeking economic and military support. Japan donated more than \$1 million in construction materials last year to improve conditions for the poor.

#### Future Directions

Salvadoran leaders, concerned about the changing geopolitical realities, apparently view diversification of aid sources with some urgency. They may believe that even if relations with Washington remain strong, competing demands in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Nicaragua will translate into fewer dollars for El Salvador. San Salvador probably also calculates the demise of Communism will weaken support in Washington as the conflict in El Salvador becomes less of an East-West issue. Regionally, the government will probably continue efforts to use the now institutionalized summits as a collective effort to garner support—especially from Europe. Nonetheless, despite its diplomatic and public relations campaign, Europe indicates the governments there remain suspicious of the ARENA administration. We believe El Salvador probably will continue to experience difficulties in attracting international support.

San Salvador is working toward establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in response to Moscow's overtures, probably calculating that ties to Moscow could boost El Salvador's bid for international legitimacy. Cristiani may believe that official relations with the Soviets—who have criticized the FMLN and, at least publicly, support a negotiated settlement—would serve to delegitimize the insurgents and isolate Cuba, a traditional rebel benefactor. Officials from both countries met for the first time last year, once to discuss Cuban assistance to the rebels and again in San Salvador to show Soviet support for a negotiated settlement.

in the assassination of six revolutionary democratic front leaders on 27 November 1980. Roberto D'Aubuisson, Lt. Amaya and others participated in a planning session regarding the assassination of Archbishop Romero. In July 1982, Lt. Amaya was reportedly personally responsible for the kidnapping of a Salvadoran national. There is no information available regarding the reason for this kidnapping.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

8 Feb 1980

EL SALVADOR: Politics of Terrorism

*The recent surge in rightist terrorism, combined with continuing violence by the radical left, will prompt more moderates to withdraw from legitimate political activity and will further polarize the country.*

Two prominent leftist parties that pulled out of the government last month have been the targets of rightist terrorism. Such tactics will push these parties closer to the militant opposition.

//The most violent rightist organizations probably are working to precipitate a conservative military coup. The group that has been most active reportedly includes National Guard officers and may be linked to the former head of the Guard.//

The Christian Democratic Party--the only political organization represented on the military-civilian junta--fears violent reprisals from both the right and left, and has publicly demanded an investigation of the armed forces' involvement in repression. A Christian Democratic leader this week stated that the rightist threat could result in the party losing the support of its rank and file because of the government's failure to protect them. Such a development could split the party--which would be likely to shatter the fragile military-civilian coalition. The party is a target of the radical left because of its participation in the government. Party efforts to meet with extreme-left leaders have been rejected.

Leftist groups are still occupying the Ministry of Education, the Spanish Embassy, and Christian Democratic headquarters. Rightists killed one leftist party leader on Tuesday and have threatened to execute leaders of the Communist front party if the leftists do not withdraw. In this atmosphere, a government attempting to hold to the center and implement moderate reform is increasingly regarded as irrelevant by all sectors.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



25 Mar 1980

EL SALVADOR: Assassination of Archbishop Romero

//The assassination of Archbishop Romero--the most influential figure in the country--could provoke widespread violence and further the government's danger of survival.//

The killing, unquestionably the work of rightwing terrorists, is likely to provoke violent reprisals by the extreme left and could touch off a popular insurrection. Reaction to the assassination also may split the coalition government, already weakened by dissension over the military's failure to curb rightist violence. Regardless of guilt, the military will at least stand accused of having inspired the shooting, and the US--because of a perceived association with the military--may also share the blame. The ultraconservative opposition would view the possible collapse of the ruling junta as a way to drive the civilians from the government and engineer a restoration of repressive military rule.

Known as the champion of the poor, the Archbishop had been the nation's most articulate critic of repression and social injustice, and had recently stepped up his denunciations of violence by the security forces and the right. He also came close to endorsing the alliance of extreme-left organizations as a political alternative.

//Much will depend on the government's handling of the funeral procession, the first opportunity for a massive demonstration of popular sentiment after the killing. Any overreaction by the security forces in such a tense situation could trigger an uprising in the streets of the capital, followed by other revolts in rural areas.//

Approved for Release

NOV 1992

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
26 March 1980  
[REDACTED]

Archbishop of El Salvador Assassinated

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of El Salvador, Oscar Arnulfo Romero, was killed by an assassin's bullet on the evening of 24 March, as he was saying Mass in the chapel of the Divine Providence Hospital in San Salvador. The murder appears to have been carefully planned and carried out by a professional. The Archbishop was hit directly in the heart by a fragmenting .22-caliber bullet, fired just as he had concluded his sermon. Eyewitness reports about the perpetrators have been confusing, ranging from an early report that it was done by four well-dressed older men to speculation that the shot was fired through a camera or timed with a camera flash. There are equally sufficient grounds for reasoning that the murder was committed by the terrorist left as by the terrorist right. A leftist organization not previously known, the Popular Revolutionary Army, has claimed credit in a communique distributed in San Salvador. Up to the present, however, the murderers have not been identified. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

26 Mar 1980

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR: Reaction to Romero's Assassination

Public reaction to Archbishop Romero's assassination is only now beginning to develop, but there have been no widespread demonstrations so far. Unless the junta's investigation produces quick results, Salvadorans will be increasingly likely to blame the government. In the meantime, yesterday's sporadic guerrilla bombings in the capital probably will continue throughout the three-day mourning period. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

5 Dec 1980

EL SALVADOR: Prospects for Rightist Coup

*There are indications that the increasingly dominant right-wing military officers may move against the governing junta.*

Centrist junta member and armed forces chief Colonel Gutierrez reportedly is convinced that the momentum for a rightwing coup is growing. Although uncertain he would prevail, Gutierrez planned to ask yesterday for a vote of confidence from top military commanders.

officers nonetheless believe that the only critical obstacle to a coup is the hesitation of National Guard Commander Colonel Vides Casanova, to whom rightist officers look for leadership. Vides may be unwilling to act at this time because of concern over the international effect of a coup.

The cogoverning Christian Democrats agree that the government needs restructuring. In line with what they view as the prevailing mood in the military, they also are pushing for the ouster of liberal junta member Colonel Majano. Although concerned over the growing power of rightist military officers and over human rights abuses by the security forces, the Christian Democrats' past acceptance of the political supremacy of the armed forces argues for further efforts to avoid a confrontation with the military.

Violence by the security forces is likely to increase in the wake of the murders last week of six leaders of the far left's Revolutionary Democratic Front. Many middle and senior grade officers as well as the Minister and sub-Minister of Defense are said to support such tactics against the left.

In response to the killings, far left insurgents hope to revitalize their dwindling popular support by organizing street demonstrations and by stepping up terrorist attacks on military posts in the capital. The funeral ceremony for the slain leftists was peaceful, however, and attracted only some 2,000 onlookers--far below leftist predictions.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



10 Dec. 1980

EL SALVADOR: Civilian-Military Agreements

*Negotiations between military leaders and the governing Christian Democrats have apparently produced a temporary resolution of the latest government crisis, but prospects are dim for a successful long-term relationship.*

The Christian Democrats have extracted tentative concessions from the military in exchange for their continued participation in the government. Both sides have agreed in principle on the restructuring of the government; several ministers and subministers are to be replaced with private sector technocrats.

Two key personalities--Colonel Gutierrez and Christian Democrat Duarte--will officially both gain from the ongoing shakeup; the weekend ouster of Colonel Majano leaves titular armed forces chief Gutierrez as sole military spokesman, while Duarte could be appointed provisional president of the junta. In practice, however, the conservative high command will continue to manipulate centrist Gutierrez, and Duarte will likely exercise little effective control over military matters.

The military has promised to investigate the recent killings of six leftists and four US Catholic women, while also agreeing to transfer some officers associated with human rights abuses--Lt. Col. Moran, director of the notorious treasury police, among those destined for removal. Nevertheless, the makeup of the Defense Ministry remains one obstacle, because the high command so far refuses to replace the powerful conservative officers who have handled the ministry since the October 1979 coup.

Both the military and the civilians appear genuinely interested in presenting a reunited image internationally--especially one that will be acceptable to the US and potential foreign lenders. The partnership will remain very fragile, however, as many military officers favor a military solution to the problem of the far left, while the civilians will likely be seeking some kind of political accommodation with leftist groups.

[REDACTED]

10 December 1980

Four U.S. Catholic Women Missionaries Murdered in El Salvador

The bodies of three nuns and a Catholic lay social worker, all U.S. citizens, were exhumed from a roadside grave on 4 December some 36 hours after they were reported missing. They were last seen alive on the evening of 2 December at the San Salvador international airport, where two of them had gone around 1800 hours to pick up two Maryknoll nuns who were returning to El Salvador to resume refugee work in Chalatenango Province. The airport is located about 40 miles south of the capital. The women are believed to have been killed sometime that night or early the following morning. [REDACTED]

Their burned Toyota minibus was found without license plates on the highway leading from the airport. Their initially unidentified bodies had been found by a passing truck driver near the highway at a point about 30 miles from San Salvador, and they had been hastily buried at the direction of officials from the neighborhood, who had had villagers dig a mass grave in a cow pasture. Three of the four had been shot twice in the head by high-velocity rifles that destroyed their features; the fourth was shot once in the chest with a pistol. Pieces of cloth which appeared to have been used as makeshift blindfolds were tied around their necks. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



[REDACTED]  
17 Dec. 1980

# EL SALVADOR: Military Attitude Toward Compromise

The recent compromise with the cogoverning Christian Democrats promises little change in the military's autonomy or ultimate control of the government. [REDACTED]

The military is more unified and its chain of command more consolidated than at any time since the coup in October 1979. The Defense Ministry retains complete control of all military affairs and has significant veto power over other government policy through junta Vice President Colonel Gutierrez, the official military spokesman in the civil-military alliance. [REDACTED]

Moreover, the military's commitments to crack down on human rights abuses by security forces and to eliminate rightwing paramilitary terrorism--even if genuine--will at best only marginally effect the level of officially inspired or condoned violence. [REDACTED] suggest that the military will even drag its feet on transfers of officers associated with human rights abuses and rightist plotting. For example, the deputy defense minister--a key rightist officer targeted for removal by the Christian Democrats-- [REDACTED] will remain in office at least temporarily. [REDACTED]

The prospects remain poor for lasting civil-military cooperation. By themselves, the Christian Democrats cannot arrange a political solution with leftist groups. [REDACTED]

The armed forces are set on eliminating the revolutionaries through indiscriminate warfare and probably would reject moves viewed as hampering that effort. Some military officers still consider replacement of the junta with a single military chief of state as the only viable alternative. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7 January 1981

[REDACTED]

### Assassinations Continue in El Salvador

On 3 January two American advisors and the head of El Salvador's violence-plagued land reform program were assassinated by unknown gunmen at the Sheraton Hotel in San Salvador. The Americans, Mark D. Pearlman and Michael P. Hammer, were associates of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), an AFL-CIO affiliate based in Washington, D.C. Ironically, Mr. Hammer had arrived in El Salvador from the United States earlier on the day of the shooting. Mr. Pearlman had been assigned in the country since May 1980. The Salvadoran victim was Rodolfo Viera, the Director of the Salvadoran Institute for Agrarian Reform (ITSA) who had been the target of a previous assassination attempt. At the time of their deaths the three men were meeting together on behalf of the agrarian reform program and were seated in a dining area of the hotel around midnight when two unidentified gunman approached and opened fire with automatic pistols at close range. Moments later the two gunmen plus a third man, believed to have been a lookout, escaped unharmed through the main lobby of the hotel.

[REDACTED]

The slaying of the two Americans brings to a total of seven the number of Americans killed in El Salvador during the last month. Four American churchwomen were abducted and murdered on 4 December. A private American security adviser was killed on 17 December. Some of these attacks have been linked to attempts by the extreme left and the extreme right to exacerbate the already serious problems being encountered by the central Salvadoran government in its efforts to bring reforms to the country. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the recent killing of any of the Americans.

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1983

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR: Violence Impedes Agrarian Reform.

The murder of Salvadoran peasant leader Rodolfo Viera this week makes prompt implementation of the government's agrarian reform program more urgent, but, at the same time, it will reduce the political benefits of the program for the junta. [REDACTED]

The death of Viera will have little immediate political impact on the violence-weary public. It will, however, have a serious effect on the still-evolving agrarian reform program in which Viera played a major role. [REDACTED]

Viera's criticism of the delays in introducing reforms and of military brutality had made his dismissal as director of the program a near certainty. Most of his followers will blame rightists allied with the government for his death. [REDACTED]

Viera headed a 150,000-member peasant union, which provided the only organized--if still conditional--popular support enjoyed by the government. Perhaps one-fourth of that membership maintains contacts with the far left, and it is now more susceptible to recruitment. Other disheartened members may simply quit--Viera was one of the few surviving center-left leaders, and his replacement is unlikely to have his appeal or credibility. [REDACTED]

The government hopes to issue the long-promised titles quickly to tenants and sharecroppers under the "land to the tiller" program, but there may be new delays. In the meantime, the original owners--themselves largely lower middle class or peasant farmers--have not yet received any compensation. [REDACTED]

Although agrarian reform is the government's most important program, the hatred and violence that divide El Salvador inhibit further progress. The government, for example, has quietly shelved a separate program expropriating medium-sized properties in order to avoid further undermining the rural economy, but it has issued no official notice of this for fear of strong criticism. Without such an announcement, however, owners will not invest but instead work against the regime. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR: More Political Problems

*Friction is evident again between President Martí's Christian Democrats and the vital business and military sectors.* [REDACTED]

//Christian Democratic Party leaders claim party members are being murdered by security forces personnel. The party leaders believe Treasury Police personnel were responsible for several killings last month. They plan to ask for the sacking of the police chief, following the reported reassignment of three extremist military officers. One prominent Christian Democrat attributes much of the renewed repression to the extremists' belief that they can act without fear of complaints from the US.// [REDACTED]

//These problems add to the enormity of the task confronting the Christian Democrats. Despite the successes to date of the counterinsurgency effort, the insurgents have disrupted telephone communications between El Salvador and over a third of the country's some 270 municipal districts.// [REDACTED]

//The guerrillas also have destroyed 19 municipal office buildings. Insurgents move freely in some of the capital's outlying districts, especially after dark, and can conscript young recruits, collect war taxes, and mount demonstrations.// [REDACTED]

The junta's efforts to win support abroad continue to have mixed results. The government envoy who toured West European capitals in the past two months says he was well received. He also noted that the government's missions abroad have no ability to carry out effective propaganda efforts. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

000006

[REDACTED]  
11 April 1981

EL SALVADOR: Increasing Violence and Terrorism

Growing abuses by security forces and increased rightwing terrorism could bring about another government crisis. [REDACTED]

The executions in San Salvador on Tuesday of some two dozen suspected leftists, apparently by Treasury Police, will rekindle frictions between Christian Democrats and the officer corps over the long-delayed transfer of the police director, Colonel Moran. Although some Christian Democrats seem certain to demand that the high command fulfill earlier pledges to remove Moran, he may prove difficult to dislodge. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that the police attack this week was actually against a leftist hideout and that several of those killed were terrorists. The security forces, however, apparently used the opportunity to dispose of other suspected leftists. [REDACTED]

The human rights violations by security forces and the escalation of rightwing terrorism throughout the country reflect the growing confidence of the military that it is gaining the upper hand over guerrilla forces. Ultrarightists are, in turn, encouraged to eliminate those liberals and moderate leftists seeking to change the status quo. [REDACTED]

The high command has transferred several of the most extreme rightist officers, but also is acquiescing in actions that will encourage extreme rightwing activities. It has, for example, recently issued an official declaration threatening foreign journalists who report unfavorably and published a list of "traitors" that includes a number of civilian progressives. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

6007

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]



13 May 1981

NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/NOCON

**UNCLASSIFIED****ARTICLES****Salvadoran Security Force Members Arrested in Deaths of U.S. Churchwomen**

Six members of El Salvador's security force were arrested on suspicion of murder in the deaths of four U.S. churchwomen last December. (See the issue of 10 December 1980.) The suspects, who remain unidentified, are being detained at a military barracks pending collection of further evidence which is needed in order to bring them to trial. (U)

Defense Minister Colonel Jose Guillermo Garcia insists that the men are only being held on suspicion based on the fact that they were at the roadblock near where the women had been driving. The FBI entered the investigation at the request of the Hondurans to aid in the matching of fingerprints taken from the women's van with those of the suspects. The suspects' weapons were turned over to the U.S. Embassy so that the FBI could conduct ballistics tests. Results of the tests have not officially been released. (U)

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

*Core 4  
release*

NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/NOCON

**UNCLASSIFIED**

1

oln



27 May 1981

[REDACTED]

### Salvadoran National Guardsmen Linked to Murders

An FBI laboratory report has linked two of the six Salvadoran National Guardsmen held in connection with the deaths of four U.S. churchwomen on 2 December 1980. (See the issues of 10 December and 13 May.) The report indicates that a fingerprint lifted from the women's van matched that of one of the guardsmen. Ballistics tests on shell casings found at the scene of the murders matched a military-issue West German-made G3 rifle which the Salvadoran Government issued to another of the suspects. Information that could point to direct involvement of the remaining four guardsmen was not established by the FBI report.

[REDACTED]

In spite of the evidence, it may be difficult to convict the guardsmen under Salvadoran law. Eyewitnesses have not come forward because there is no incentive under the law to turn state's evidence. Additionally, there is a lack of any clear-cut motive for the murders, and intimidation and assassination of judges and attorneys working on politically sensitive cases are not without precedence.

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

6

021

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
1 June 1981  
[REDACTED]

### Salvadorans Held in Murder of Two Americans

Ricardo Sol Meza was arraigned at the Fifth Penal Court in San Salvador on 24 May in connection with the 3 January deaths of American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) officials Michael P. Hammer and Mark D. Pearlman and the former president of the Salvadoran Agrarian Transformation Institute (ISTA), Jose Rodolfo Viera. (See the issue of 7 January 1981.) Also implicated in the murders is Hans Christ (Krist), a Salvadoran with dual West German citizenship who was arrested on 15 April by FBI agents in Miami. It appeared that Christ was planning to leave for West Germany or Chile. He is still being held in a Miami jail pending the outcome of extradition proceedings.

Both Sol Meza and Christ, who is Sol Meza's brother-in-law, are suspected of having ties to rightwing groups opposed to the Salvadoran land reform program. Christ's father, who reportedly owned a large cotton plantation that was expropriated by the Government, now lives in self-exile in Guatemala. Sol Meza is one of the wealthiest men in El Salvador and has an interest in the San Salvador Sheraton where the three men were slain.

It is still unclear whether Pearlman and Hammer were targeted by the assassins or they just unfortunately happened to be in the company of Viera, the real target. There are indications that the killings may not have been a careful plot, but rather a spur-of-the-moment decision due to the lateness of the hour and the empty dining room. Viera, because of his position with ISTA, had incurred the enmity of the large landowners. The land reform program originally included the expropriation of estates of more than 1200 acres but had been expanded to include those of more than 500 acres. Hammer, who had just returned to El Salvador, was well known as one of the architects of the land reform policy. Sol Meza in sworn testimony stated that neither he nor his party was in the dining area where the trio was seated, but rather at a table adjacent to the roller skating rink located at the Sheraton. Included in Sol Meza's party was National Guard Major Denis Moran. Teresa de Jesus Torres, a waitress at the hotel, testified that she had seen Sol Meza and Christ in the corridor leading to the dining room before the murders and they were making hand signals to someone outside. At least one other man is being sought for involvement in the killings and three others may be involved as conspirators. Torres was brought to the U.S. for protection but returned to El Salvador for the deposition. She is still in protective custody.

Sol Meza and Christ maintain their innocence, and a conviction will be difficult because of the politics of the case. Another witness is considered essential to corroborate Torres' testimony in order to win conviction in a Salvador court; prosecutors are hoping to produce one soon. The entire judicial process could take a year or more. Meanwhile, Sol Meza remains incarcerated in Mariona Penitentiary and enjoys benefits and accommodations not usually accorded other prisoners.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] W  
[REDACTED]  
2 September 1981

### Sol Meza Ordered Freed on Bail in El Salvador

Ricardo Sol Meza, a wealthy Salvadoran businessman accused of killing two American agricultural advisers and the head of El Salvador's Agrarian Reform Institute on 3 January, has been ordered freed by a Salvadoran judge. (See the issues of 7 January and 3 June 1981.) The judge ruled that there was insufficient evidence for denying bail to Sol Meza. Sol Meza remained in a special cell at national police headquarters while another judge, who had denied him bail, awaited formal notification of the new order. The trial is to continue. [REDACTED]

In a possibly related incident, a contact of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) informed U.S. Embassy officials in El Salvador that the murder of attorney Judith Cisneros on 18 August was linked to the Sol Meza case. Cisneros, according to rumors in the legal community, was assassinated because she had evidence related to the murder case. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### Salvadoran Murder Suspects Freed

Two Salvadorans implicated in the 3 January 1981 murders of Michael Hammer and Mark Pearlman, U.S. land reform specialists, have been released from custody. (See the issues of 7 January, 3 and 24 June, and 2 September 1981.) Ricardo Sol Meza was released in El Salvador because of lack of evidence. Hans Christ, Sol Meza's brother-in-law, was released on bond from a Miami jail on 26 September. Christ, who was arrested on 15 April, was ordered to stay away from airports and railroad stations and to telephone his attorney three times a week while extradition hearings continue.

In a possibly related incident of intimidation involving people connected with the case, an unknown assailant tried to kill the son of El Salvador's Ambassador to the United States. The attempted assassination occurred two days after the publication in El Salvador of a letter from the Ambassador to Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig outlining new evidence in the murders.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
25 November 1981

### Investigation of Murders of U.S. Nuns in El Salvador at a Standstill

Investigation into the murders of four U.S. churchwomen in El Salvador is at a standstill because there is insufficient evidence at this time to charge anyone with the crimes under Salvadoran law. (See the issues of 10 December 1980 and 13 May 1981.) The judge in charge of the official investigation has stated that the case is still "technically open" but there is nothing more he can do unless new evidence is received.

According to [REDACTED], the special investigating commission appointed last December is not pursuing the case any longer. Ballistics and fingerprint tests by the FBI resulted in the arrest of two National Guard soldiers along with four other National Guardsmen who were on patrol with them the night of the murders. President Jose Napoleon Duarte has officially requested polygraph equipment and other assistance from the FBI in an effort to resolve the case.

Opinion among [REDACTED] is divided as to whether the six soldiers will ever be prosecuted. Some believe that the Salvadorans will be forced to act because of pressure from the U.S., while others believe that senior army officers will stonewall any further investigation.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]



1 8 February 1982

El Salvador: Status of Churchwomen Murder Case

Significant progress has been made recently in the investigation of the murder of the four US churchwomen. [REDACTED] is confident that most of the facts have been pieced together and that sometime soon--no date has been determined--six National Guardsmen will be turned over to civilian criminal courts for prosecution.

Written and taped affidavits have been collected from the accused, as well as from most persons even remotely connected to the investigation. One of the guardsmen has confessed to his part in the crime and has implicated the others. Although evidence is not conclusive on the point, the crime appears to have been planned and directed by the junior sergeant in charge of the airport detachment without the knowledge of any higher authority. The sergeant and his five men changed to civilian clothes and specifically targeted the nuns, whom they considered to be "subversive" churchwomen.

Nevertheless, some cover-up after the fact by some mid-level officers in the National Guard probably occurred. This underscores the fact that final disposition of the case still rests with the Armed Forces High Command, which must ease the justice process along without causing major tensions in military ranks.

When the military turns the case over to civilian courts, [REDACTED] that it will be necessary to hire a private prosecutor representing the families of the victims to augment the efforts of the government prosecutor--this is required under Salvadoran law. An attorney has already agreed in principle to accept the job, and the victims' families are being so notified. Despite the solid case developed by the prosecution, conviction is not necessarily assured. The Salvadoran judicial process has several unique features that could cause problems, and the trial may be affected by the violent environment. There are indications that some pressure already has been aimed at the Attorney General's office from anonymous persons, causing one low-level government attorney to ask to be taken off the case.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



[REDACTED]

the entire day.

Nevertheless,

Comment: Recent government offensives have disrupted

### Death of Dutch Journalists

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The Sandinistas are developing contingency plans to

[REDACTED]

\_\_\_\_\_

[REDACTED]

27 July 1982

Intelligence Community Assessment\*

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR: Performance on Certification Issues - Summary

1. Although some abuses continue to occur, the monthly rate of political deaths is down 45 percent from last year and the Salvadoran government and military leaders continue to work toward curbing human and civil rights abuses, and to respond to the public's interest in participatory government as underscored by the 28 March constituent assembly elections. Nevertheless, their efforts continue to be hampered by the weaknesses of El Salvador's unsophisticated body politic. These include an inability to separate partisan and personal goals from common national priorities and a failure to put aside ideological conflicts that in the past have thwarted the democratic process.

2. Despite the rigidity of the political system and the myopia of certain of its key participants, the prospects for continuing progress—while slow and arduous—seem generally positive. The civilian government has so far been characterized generally by pragmatic compromise, with the result that political, economic, and social reforms are continuing and violence has been reduced. This position has been reinforced by the military high command, which distinguished itself as the major moderating force during the fractious political negotiations that followed the election. Led by Defense Minister Garcia, the armed forces appear increasingly aware of the psychological dimension of the war and cognizant that the insurgents are the ultimate beneficiaries of any abuses.

\*This assessment reflects the judgment of the intelligence community following a meeting of the National Foreign Intelligence Board representatives on 27 July 1982 chaired by the Director of Central Intelligence.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

On the issue of investigations into the murders of six U.S. citizens and the disappearance of John Sullivan:

- We have no [REDACTED] on the investigations of the murders of four U.S. churchwomen or the two U.S. land reform advisers. Since the last certification, the five National Guardsmen charged with killing the churchwomen have been returned to civilian authorities and are awaiting trial. Recent progress by the new government commission investigating the American Institute for Free Labor Development murders also raises the prospects for a successful conclusion of that case. New witnesses have come forward, and evidence is building which more clearly implicates known former security force personnel and wealthy civilians in the crime.

- The disappearance of Mr. John Sullivan, a free-lance reporter on assignment for a U.S. magazine, remains a mystery. Although [REDACTED] reports indicate the continued awareness of the Salvadoran authorities about U.S. interest in the case, no new leads have developed. We have no [REDACTED] that would shed any light on Mr. Sullivan's disappearance.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR: Political Difficulties Persist

*Ultrarightist political forces led by Assembly President D'Aubuisson are maneuvering more aggressively against moderates in the government and military.* [REDACTED]

Criticism centers on the investigation of the murders of two US labor advisers in January 1981. Rightist spokesmen publicly are defending the key suspects--two junior military officers with ties to D'Aubuisson--and are berating national leaders for submitting to alleged US interference in the local investigation. High-level government and military officials and US Embassy personnel have received threats regarding their involvement in the case. [REDACTED]

Defense Minister Garcia remains a primary target of the rightist campaign. He is publicly accused of bowing to US pressure by keeping one of the suspects under detention despite a judge's order to release him. Privately, he faces continued efforts by D'Aubuisson loyalists in the military to remove him because of his alleged poor direction of the war effort. [REDACTED]

Garcia has responded by vowing to prosecute any military personnel that engage in criminal acts, particularly the two officers charged with murdering the US advisers. He recently presided over a conference of some 200 local commanders in which he ordered them to stay out of politics and lectured them on the penalties for committing human rights violations. [REDACTED]

Comment: Continued sparring between Garcia and D'Aubuisson is likely as they move further apart on a variety of issues. Garcia probably will come under even greater pressure if the military fails to regain quickly the initiative now held by the insurgents. [REDACTED]

The Army apparently has not yet decided to launch a major counterattack in the north, because of anticipated guerrilla actions elsewhere. If it delays too long, however, public confidence in it could be weakened. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

21 October 1982

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



7 Mar 198

EL SALVADOR: Moves Toward Cooperation

The Congress of El Salvador has passed a law of agrarian reform, and the military has agreed to accept the law. The military will accept his resignation.

The liberal Christian Democrats reached a compromise last week with some hardline and moderate conservatives to win extension of the controversial "land to the tiller" program through the end of the year. Assembly leader C'Aubuisson and his National Republican Alliance voted against the proposal.

recently told President Magana and the military high command that [redacted] offer a letter of resignation and honor it if necessary. Participants [redacted] agreed that a way must be found to convict and imprison National Guard Lieutenant Lopez Sibrian--accused of the assassination of two US labor advisers and the head of Salvadoran land reform in 1981. [redacted]

Comment: The trend toward cooperation is continuing despite the fragility of the coalition government. In the past two weeks, rival political parties have agreed to a national pacification plan, a formal peace commission, an earlier date for presidential elections, and continued agrarian reform. [redacted]

Renewed efforts to prosecute Lopez Sibrian could increase friction within the government and the military. The departure of Garcia, however, would help to ease tensions, at least temporarily. [redacted]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## EL SALVADOR Human Rights Abuses

A government security official claims that corruption, political pressure, and corruption in the judicial system are ensuring continuing human rights abuses as well as the activity of extreme rightist death squads [REDACTED]

Colonel Moran, the head of the 2,000-man Treasury Police, has admitted [REDACTED] that he could bring criminal charges against at least seven Treasury officers [REDACTED] however, turning the offenders over to the civilian courts would result in their exoneration [REDACTED]. If he dismissed men "whose only skill is killing," they would either end up working with rightist death squads or with leftist insurgents [REDACTED]

Moran denied that the Treasury Police--which have the best intelligence sources and worst human rights record in El Salvador--are responsible for death squad actions. [REDACTED] these groups are controlled by the Constituent Assembly's chief of security and other extreme rightists, who rely on intimidation to avoid prosecution. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] claimed intervention by extreme rightist Assembly leader D'Aubuisson caused the civilian courts to release Lieutenant Lopez Sibrian, one of the instigators of the murder of two US labor representatives in 1981. Although Lopez Sibrian is back on active duty [REDACTED] a majority of the officer corps favors reopening the case. [REDACTED]

**Comment:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] conclusion regarding military sentiment for a reexamination of the Lopez Sibrian case is supported by a recent survey [REDACTED]. The willingness of the officer corps to press for punishment reflects its fear of jeopardizing continuing US military assistance. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]





DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

August 1983

CENTRAL AMERICAN MONTHLY REPORT #1

Summary

Overall trends in Central America generally have been favorable over the past month. The Salvadoran armed forces continue to hold the tactical initiative in that country, and there are more indications of disarray within the insurgent leadership. In Nicaragua, the anti-Sandinista insurgents have stepped up their operations after a prolonged lull, and outside pressures on Managua are forcing the regime to consider compromise on key negotiation issues. The coup in Guatemala has installed a new chief of state more willing to cooperate militarily with Honduras and El Salvador. The situation remains relatively calm in Honduras and Costa Rica, and in Panama political opinion is swinging to a more pro-US position.

Nevertheless, there is still cause for concern. The Salvadoran insurgents appear determined to launch a major counteroffensive in hope of regaining the initiative. There are also some tentative indications that they intend to step up political action in urban areas. The Sandinistas, with Cuban advisory assistance, are mobilizing reserve and militia units to

This memorandum was prepared by [REDACTED]

ALA.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

confront the insurgents. In Guatemala, there is a risk Rejia may be replaced in a rightwing coup. Finally, in Honduras, the Cubans and Nicaraguans continue to try to set up an insurgent infrastructure to pressure the Somoza government. [REDACTED]

## EL SALVADOR

### Military

Government forces during August continued to press the guerrillas throughout most of the country. They swept northeastern Chalatenango Department in early August, and were [REDACTED] active in nine of the 14 departments. On 17 August the Army began an operation in the Jucuaran area in southeastern Usulután, long a major guerrilla stronghold and a key infiltration point for arms and supplies from Nicaragua. [REDACTED]

Since June, the Army has used improved small unit tactics together with more effective civic action programs to seize the military initiative and keep the guerrillas off balance. Military leaders are encouraged by the performance of the troops in the field--especially the three US-trained immediate reaction battalions--and by what several amnesty seekers have described as a deterioration of insurgent morale. The high command [REDACTED] believes it could effectively eliminate the threat of large-scale guerrilla operations by the end of the year if it receives continued US weapons and logistic support. [REDACTED]

The insurgents remain largely on the defensive, only sporadically attacking government garrisons and installations. The guerrillas' planned major offensive evidently continues to be delayed by the government campaign as well as by coordination difficulties among the various insurgent factions. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that insurgents in Morazan may have already received at least two SA-7 launchers from Nicaragua. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that the guerrillas were to receive a supply of heat-seeking, individually operated antiaircraft missiles. The [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

hand-held SA-7 would pose a threat to the Salvadoran Air Force as well as to [REDACTED] other aircraft operating in the area. [REDACTED]

#### Arms Flow

[REDACTED]

that the insurgents [REDACTED] prior to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] military officials claim that deliveries ceased by that date. [REDACTED]

#### Recent analysis

[REDACTED] that La Pelota Island off northwestern Nicaragua is an arms [REDACTED] shipment point. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that arms and munitions were sent from Managua to La Pelota for onward shipment by canoe to El Salvador. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Salvadoran Army intercepted a 100-man guerrilla force en route from supply depots in the coastal area of southeastern Usulután to a base area on the Guazapa Volcano. Prisoners and captured documents indicate the group was transporting 170 rifles and a large quantity of ammunition to replenish depleted arsenals in San Salvador and Cuscatlan Departments. [REDACTED]

#### Political

The recent successes of the Salvadoran armed forces reportedly are causing anxiety among Christian Democratic Party leaders, who fear that these gains will tend to reinforce the Army's traditional role as political arbiter. They are also worried that President Magana's sympathies lie with the National Conciliation Party--traditionally aligned with the Army--and believe he supports that group's presidential candidate. They cite the fact that Magana recently replaced several Christian Democratic governors with Conciliationists while reducing the participation of their party at official functions. [REDACTED]

Human rights issues and the prospect of peace talks with the insurgents are worrying extreme rightist leaders. Efforts by Defense Minister Vides to investigate human rights cases involving military personnel reportedly resulted in threats from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



## DIRECTIONAL OF INTELLIGENCE

10 September 1985

## CENTRAL AMERICAN MONTHLY REPORT 47

## Summary

Nevertheless, in El Salvador, the Insurgents have finally launched a major offensive to regain the military initiative, and the Army has been hard pressed to respond effectively. In Guatemala, the new military government is pressing for revival of a regional defense alliance while indicating it may hold elections earlier than July 1984. In Honduras, President Suazo is recovering well from his heart attack, and the Army has defeated a Cuban Nicaraguan attempt to set up an insurgent infrastructure. Costa Rican relations with Nicaragua have been further damaged by the capture of a Spanish terrorist and several Sandinista soldiers by Costa Rican security forces. In Panama, the withdrawal of General Noriega from the presidential race has raised the possibility that President de la Espriella may attempt to extend his stay in office. Finally, the Contadora peace effort has managed to stay on track with the agreement by the Central American countries to a statement of objectives for further clarification.

This memorandum was prepared by [REDACTED] AIA

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

5 7 8



EL SALVADOR

Military

Military activity in September was highlighted by an upsurge of guerrilla operations and increased Army casualties. The insurgent attack on San Miguel in early September was followed later in the month by the brief occupation of Jucuaran, in southeastern Usulután, and by attacks against government forces and economic targets in Morazan, San Miguel, and San Vicente. All the insurgent factions apparently are taking part, and the fighting has recently spread to central El Salvador.

The attacks by the guerrillas probably are part of their long-awaited joint offensive, but they have failed so far to attract any widespread popular support. Indeed, the People's Revolutionary Army faction indicated they were encountering strong resistance to their attempts to win over the local population.

The FMLN offensive is scheduled to conclude in late September. the guerrillas plan to intensify operations in La Unión and Choluteca Departments, and will conclude their offensive with a major action in Chalatenango. the insurgents hope to attack the city of La Unión soon.

The upsurge in insurgent activity has raised concern over government troop fatigue and some supply shortages. Salvadoran military leaders also have voiced dissatisfaction with the departmental commander in and with the performance of several elite units. indicates the Army commander in San Vicente may be given control of the operation.

Arms Flow

Salvadoran officials believe the flow has been greatly reduced by anti-Sandinista insurgent activity in Nicaragua, but there is little to support this contention. Moreover, the fact that the Salvadoran guerrillas have been able to sustain a relatively high





[REDACTED]

leader Francisco "Chachi" Guerrero is campaigning hard to become his party's candidate. [REDACTED] the ultrarightist ARENA party believe Roberto D'Aubulson is still their most likely candidate. Party leader Hugo Berrera [REDACTED] would accept the ARENA nomination if D'Aubulson does [REDACTED]. Meanwhile, ARENA is attempting to form a rightwing coalition to prevent a victory by Duarte. [REDACTED]

Rightwing death squads stepped up their activities not only against union leaders but also against alleged insurgent collaborators. Three university professors and a member of the Salvadoran Foreign Ministry were kidnapped by death squads in September. [REDACTED], as many as 25 kidnappings attributed to death squads occurred in one week. The Assembly overwhelmingly approved a proposal calling for the defense minister to investigate the upsurge in death squad activities. [REDACTED]

3

[REDACTED]

10

5A/10

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

October 1981

CENTRAL AMERICAN MONTHLY REPORT #3 [REDACTED]

SUMMARY

Tensions in the region continue to escalate as the search for a peaceful solution goes on. The Sandinista regime has come under intense military and economic pressure over the past month as a result of continued insurgent attacks, but it is reacting defiantly and calling for more military aid. In El Salvador, the insurgents have continued their offensive actions, although their military resupply from Cuba and Nicaragua may be reduced. In Guatemala, Chief of State Mejia has removed one of his main military rivals, but the security situation remains tense as a result of both rightist and leftist violence. The Honduran government is pushing for greater regional cooperation against the Sandinistas amid reports of a possible new insurgent infiltration attempt. Costa Rican relations with Nicaragua have reached a new low as a result of a Sandinista attack on a Costa Rican border post. In Panama, President de la Espriella and General Noriega continue to maneuver in preparation for next year's scheduled elections. Finally, the Contadora peace effort has produced several draft treaties, but serious obstacles remain. [REDACTED]

\* \* \*

This memorandum was prepared by [REDACTED]

ALA. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR

Military

The guerrillas' joint offensive in eastern and central El Salvador continued throughout October. Their activity in large part has been marked by hit-and-run attacks against small towns and isolated garrisons, sabotage of electrical facilities and bridges, and ambushes of government relief forces. Government units took particularly heavy losses in attacks on Tenancingo and Nuevo Eden de San Juan. The offensive has succeeded in blunting much of the momentum built by the Army during its summer campaign. [REDACTED]

The insurgents appear to be planning for stepped up operations in the central part of the country. [REDACTED] An unspecified number of guerrillas [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] area of Cuscatlan [REDACTED] for a new operation, possibly against the besieged town of Suchitoto. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Cuba recently urged the guerrillas to resolve their differences. [REDACTED] representatives from all five factions met [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] they reached agreement on a division of responsibilities. [REDACTED] the insurgent leadership in Nicaragua recently solicited Cuban advice regarding plans for the upcoming offensive. [REDACTED]

The Army's optimistic outlook evident this summer has now given way to some pessimism. Some field commanders have been criticized for failing to be more aggressive, and junior officers [REDACTED] are unhappy over the conduct of the war and the failure of many senior officers to visit the battlefield. Nevertheless, the Army continues to launch sweep operations to regain lost territory and preempt insurgent actions. [REDACTED]

Meanwhile, growing military dissent over the war and other issues has prompted some key military commanders to propose a shakeup of the High Command. [REDACTED] these officers have convinced Defense Minister Vides to make some sweeping command changes by the end of the year, including reshaping the entire General Staff apparatus, appointing a new Chief of Staff, and replacing some department and unit commanders. Vides' own position, however, appears safe at this juncture. [REDACTED]

5

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### Arms Flow

[REDACTED] the insurgents continue to receive war materiel from Nicaragua. [REDACTED] the supplies consist primarily of ammunition as well as spare parts, clothing, and medicine, and are being sent by various air, land, and sea routes.

[REDACTED] Cuba informed guerrilla leaders that it would reduce assistance to them because problems in Nicaragua were forcing Havana to divert greater resources to the Sandinistas. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the port area of northwestern Nicaragua serves as a transshipment point for sea delivery of war materiel to the Salvadoran insurgents. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] when Sandinista insurgents attacked the facility at the end of the month, but the extent of damage is not yet known. [REDACTED]

### Political

\* Salvadoran labor turned out for a demonstration in late September in support of more liberal reform in the draft constitution currently being debated in the Assembly. Some 15,000 to 20,000 workers and campesinos staged a peaceful rally in San Salvador that was actively supported by members of the Christian Democratic Party. [REDACTED]

The rally was overshadowed by a resurgence of rightwing death squad activity aimed at ending the reform campaign. Several union leaders and leftist intellectuals have been either kidnapped or killed. Ultrarightist leader Roberto D'Aubuisson charged publicly that the moderate leader of the largest democratic campesino labor organization had ties with the extreme left. An Assembly deputy also received a telephone threat during legislative debate on reform articles, causing the session to be suspended. Each of the parties in the Assembly is promoting its own version of an article dealing with land tenure, but compromise is expected on the amount of land available for future agrarian reform. [REDACTED]

The presidential election is still on track for the first quarter of 1984. [REDACTED] claimed that Foreign Minister Chavez Mena has agreed to become Duarte's running mate, a

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

development that would strengthen the ticket and perhaps result in a Christian Democratic majority on the first ballot. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

There were no meetings this month between the government's peace commission and the insurgents. The insurgents have proposed El Salvador as the site for any future meetings. The government is reluctant to accept this, however, and the dialogue is at an apparent impasse. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(M)



NAVJAG 11, 1988

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

5 October 1981

SECURITY SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Summary

We have no [REDACTED] that radical groups are specifically targeting the National Bipartisan Committee for violent actions during its visit to Central America. Nevertheless, because of the relatively poor quality of the security services and the endemic violence in the region, an isolated terrorist act is always possible. This is particularly true in El Salvador, [REDACTED] where insurgent groups are capable of carrying out sophisticated operations. [REDACTED]

\* \* \*

A recent assessment [REDACTED] indicates that a potential threat to the Committee could come from either the far left or far right elements in El Salvador. [REDACTED], the FMLN plans to sharply increase its military activities between now and mid-October. This could include attacks against the Salvadoran air base at Ilopango and the adjacent civilian airport, the likely point of entry for the Committee. [REDACTED] however, that the FMLN leadership now appears to favor dialogue

This memorandum was requested by Ambassador Ihlandman for the Bipartisan Committee. It was prepared by [REDACTED], AIA.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release  
NOV 1993

SECRET

4

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

with the government. Consequently, [REDACTED] does not believe that the FMLN would attempt to create an incident aimed at disrupting the Committee's visit. [REDACTED] does not rule out the possibility of isolated incidents carried out by renegade members of one or more guerrilla factions, however. [REDACTED]

Regarding the right, [REDACTED] Roberto D'Aubuisson, head of the ultra-rightist ARENA party and President of the Constituent Assembly, is upset by the efforts of US representatives to establish a dialogue between the insurgents and the government. [REDACTED] D'Aubuisson mistrusts US motives and reportedly has vowed that he and his party will do everything possible to ensure that a dialogue does not take place. Consequently, [REDACTED] believes that the likelihood of a problem from the far right is greater than from the far left. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Executive Order 12958, Section 1.5

(P)



Department of Defense

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

20 December 1981

CENTRAL AMERICAN THREAT ASSESSMENT

Summary

[REDACTED] Cuba and the Sandinistas are attempting to increase the capabilities of regional Central American leftist groups to carry out renewed violence, possibly against US targets. In most cases, these efforts appear to be related to Sandinista threats of a wider regional conflict in the event of a US-supported invasion of Nicaragua. In some cases, however, the support may assist the attempts of local leftist groups to demonstrate their own viability. In particular, [REDACTED] leftists may plan new violence [REDACTED] to coincide with an expected insurgent offensive in El Salvador. Nevertheless, there is little evidence to indicate that regional leftists are preparing for simultaneous actions against US targets in the immediate future, especially over the Christmas holidays. [REDACTED]

This memorandum was requested by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. It was prepared by [REDACTED] ALA. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

### EL SALVADOR

The FMLN appears to be planning an upsurge in urban terrorist activity, perhaps to coincide with a military offensive [REDACTED] the guerrillas have large caches of arms and ammunition in and around San Salvador, and continue to train members in urban warfare techniques. In view of the fact that well trained urban insurgents are eager to carry the war to the enemy, including the US, it is possible the guerrillas may undertake some action against the US Embassy or US personnel in El Salvador. In particular, the recently formed Revolutionary Workers Movement (MOR)--a splinter group consisting of the more radical elements of the FPL--could conduct terrorist actions to win support from members of its parent organization. Finally, there is an increased threat to US personnel from the Salvadoran far right as a result of US pressure on the Army to crack down on death squad activities. [REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

### EL SALVADOR: Crackdown on Death Squads

Government efforts to discourage death squad activity evidently are having some effect. Police arrested an Army officer implicated in the murder of US labor officials in 1981, and they reportedly have warned civilians associated with death squads to leave the country or face arrest. [REDACTED]

the number of deaths attributed to the squads has decreased substantially over the past three weeks. He claimed only three such deaths were recorded last week. [REDACTED]

Comment: The reduction in activities of the death squads may be only temporary. The recent ratification of the new constitution with its controversial land reform articles may have removed the motive for some of the intimidation by the death squads. Once the election campaign begins in earnest, however, there is likely to be a resurgence of both leftist and rightist violence. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]



Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

2 March 1984

EL SALVADOR: D'AUBUISSON'S TERRORIST ACTIVITIES

Introduction

D'Aubuisson's involvement in rightwing terrorist activities has been alleged in a variety of [redacted] since the late 1970s. [redacted] have had the characteristic of unsubstantiated rumor or allegation, [redacted] little corroboration on specific activities attributable to D'Aubuisson has been available. Over the past year, however, several [redacted] have alleged D'Aubuisson's complicity with terrorist elements in the military and the civilian ARMA party. [redacted] moreover, have added credibility to [redacted] on D'Aubuisson's involvement in the assassination of Archbishop Romero.

POOR ORIGINAL

This memorandum was requested by Vice-President Bush. It was prepared by [redacted] ALA.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

### D'Aubuisson's Military Contacts

Before leaving the armed forces in the wake of the October 1979 military coup, Major D'Aubuisson had served much of his career as an intelligence officer with the National Guard. He and several colleagues--graduates from the academy classes of 1963, 1964, and 1966--worked directly under or in cooperation with National Guard Director Medrano, a notorious and powerful figure in military and rightwing civilian circles. Medrano had his proteges focus on counterintelligence and rural security; during the 1960s and 1970s, D'Aubuisson and his colleagues helped develop civilian intelligence networks and vigilante organizations controlled by the National Guard. They also engaged in illegal detentions, torture, and the killing of prisoners--habits which suggests stayed with some of them after the 1979 reformist coup.

Some of D'Aubuisson's most notorious past associates in the military were Lieutenant Colonels Staben, Iacapa, Iepeda, Cruz, Ochoa, Ponce, and Moran. These and other middle-grade officers were in turn the mentors of a new generation of junior officers to have been involved in death squad and other illegal activities. The murder of two US labor advisors at the Sheraton Hotel in San Salvador in January 1981, for example, was authorized by two young officers known for their criminal activities and close association with D'Aubuisson and other extremist officers.

### D'Aubuisson's Political Organization

In May 1980, D'Aubuisson was jailed and then exiled for coup plotting. He left for Guatemala and formed the Broad National Front (FAN), a semi-clandestine political organization bent on overthrowing the reformist regime in San Salvador. indicates that FAN received significant funding from wealthy Salvadoran exiles living abroad, and have suggested FAN links with US politicians and businessmen. The FAN used black market contacts to arm a small para-military organization in El Salvador that included both civilians and military personnel, some of whom probably belonged to existing death squads loyal to D'Aubuisson.

By the fall of 1981, D'Aubuisson had reorganized the FAN into a bonafide political party known as the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). He convinced businessmen and other professionals to join the party and support candidates in the

March 1982 Constituent Assembly elections. During this period, rightwing gunmen [redacted] allied with ARENA killed several Christian Democratic party members, civil servants, and labor figures.

ARENA has become the second largest political party in El Salvador and probably is the best funded and organized going into this month's presidential election. Within the party, however, D'Aubuisson is [redacted] to maintain a team that engages in political intimidation, including abduction, torture, and murder. Until the beginning of this year, the head of this team was Dr. Hector Regalado, the Chief of Security for the Assembly. He and several subordinates belonging to ARENA reportedly utilized members of the Secret Anti-Communist Army and the Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez Brigade--two death squads founded several years ago by D'Aubuisson--to carry out murder and sabotage against ARENA's real or perceived enemies. [redacted] show that Regalado's group was considering targeting US Embassy officials in response to press stories about rightwing terrorism. Following the visit of Vice President Bush and the resignation of D'Aubuisson from the Assembly to run for president, Regalado and two associates also left their public posts.

[redacted] on the status of the ARENA-sponsored terrorist groups. Killings in January and February of this year thought to be the work of rightwing extremists cannot be pinned specifically to D'Aubuisson or to any of several other death squads--military or civilian--known to exist.

#### Assassination of Archbishop Romero

[redacted] have accused D'Aubuisson of complicity in the murder of Romero in March 1980. [redacted] is credible, there is nothing that could be construed as hard proof.

While any of a number of rightwing death squads could have planned and carried out what was a relatively simple execution in a neighborhood chapel in San Salvador, there probably were few so fanatical and daring as D'Aubuisson to do it. [redacted] on the Romero assassination claim that D'Aubuisson and his colleagues held meetings in early 1980 to plan the killing. [redacted] those in attendance were asked to draw lots to determine who would carry out the act. [redacted]

[REDACTED]

indicate that military personnel comprised the hit squad and that  
a former National Guard enlisted man fired the fatal shot. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] differ as to the logistics of the killing.

NOTE: [REDACTED] have been at variance in interpreting  
the death squad issue. [REDACTED] launched an effort to assure that [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] are working from the same data base. Collection requirements are also  
being drafted in preparation for an intelligence community assessment of the  
death squads.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

14 June 1984

LEFTIST DEATH SQUADS

Salvadoran guerrilla factions generally began as small cells of urban middle class terrorists who used kidnapping, torture, and murder as political tools. The overwhelming majority of victims of leftist violence have been common rural citizens. For example, during 1980 and 1981--the two years of greatest political violence--the insurgents publicly took credit for thousands of "adjusticiamientos" (judicious executions) of rural inhabitants allegedly collaborating with the military, the government, or semi-autonomous reform agencies. Guerrilla factions continue routinely to claim responsibility for local assassination, [REDACTED] Methods of operation suggest that politically motivated killings by the left are generally carried out by specifically assigned teams of urban militants and rural guerrillas. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] cited guerrilla plans to assassinate high Salvadoran officials and political party leaders. [REDACTED]

Distinguishing between leftist or rightist responsibility for civilian deaths remains difficult. [REDACTED] that of the 165 registered political deaths between 1 March and 30 April 22 were attributed to the insurgent left and the rest were committed by "unknown assailants." [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]



On 23 March in San Salvador leftist terrorists assassinated retired Gen. José Alberto Medrano, a tough anti-Communist considered by many of his critics to be the originator of organized rightwing violence in El Salvador. We believe that Medrano's assassination, as well as the recent killing of the Armed Forces spokesman and prominent conservative leaders, is part of an insurgent strategy to increase urban warfare. The selective murders are probably intended to provoke a response from rightwing extremists, who have been inactive for some time, or from the Salvadoran military and security forces, who have reined in their use of violent tactics. The guerrillas would propagandize such a reaction as evidence that human rights abuses continue to be a serious problem in El Salvador, despite President José Napoleon Duarte's reformist efforts. [REDACTED]

No specific guerrilla group has yet claimed responsibility for Medrano's murder, but [REDACTED] indicates that other "hated executioners" will meet a similar fate. It was Medrano, a former director of the National Guard, who created the now defunct National Democratic Organization (ORDEN), a rural paramilitary force that from 1964 to 1979 was responsible for the intimidation, murder, and disappearance of Salvadorans suspected of involvement with the extreme left. Many former associates of Medrano's were subsequently linked to death squad activities in the early 1980s, including extreme rightwing political leader Roberto D'Aubuisson. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] MAY 1985

[REDACTED]

FRIDAY, 21 JUNE 1985

#### EL SALVADOR: Terrorist Attack

The unprecedented attack in San Salvador on Wednesday suggests the growing desperation of urban guerrillas and may herald a dramatic escalation of terrorism in El Salvador. [REDACTED]

The terrorists fired initially at US Marines in the sidewalk cafe, then at other tables where Salvadoran civilians were seated, and finally at passing traffic. [REDACTED]

Comment: Security in the area of the attack has always been lax, even though it abuts the homes of wealthy Salvadorans, government officials, and foreign diplomats. The magnitude of the act goes beyond previous incidents of even the radical guerrilla splinter groups, who have sought targets of opportunity among the ruling establishment and US personnel. It is unlikely that the mainstream insurgent alliance, which is increasingly concerned over its eroding international image, would have authorized such an operation. The rebel hierarchy now face a dilemma over how to dissociate themselves from the massacre without completely alienating the dissident urban class. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 19 Aug 85 [REDACTED] 1121

**EL SALVADOR: Probe of Terrorist Killings**

President Duarte has urged his Defense Minister to order police and military units to cooperate more closely in investigating the terrorist massacre of US and Salvadoran citizens on 15 June. Meanwhile, the Salvadoran National Guard and Treasury Police last week captured two guerrillas who admitted involvement in the killings and identified others. [REDACTED] The attack had not been coordinated with guerrilla position leaders. [REDACTED]

Comment: Duarte's order comes in response to an apparent lack of collaboration among units charged with the investigation and indicates the government's concern that the often-competitive police and military agencies may be hampering the probe. Greater cooperation among the various agencies involved, together with the information from [REDACTED] could lead to further arrests. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

27 MAY 86

**EL SALVADOR: Military Seizes Investigation**

The armed forces have taken control from civilian authorities in the two-month-old investigation of military personnel involved in kidnaping for profit. [REDACTED]  
The case will be handled by military courts under Decree 50, a special legal provision that gives the military jurisdiction over cases involving subversion and terrorism. [REDACTED] earlier this month that the accused leader of the kidnap ring—Lieutenant Colonel Staben—was released for "lack of evidence," while some accomplices, including another important line officer, Lieutenant Colonel Zacapa, remain at large. Three suspected members of the crime ring have died in suspicious circumstances—two while in police custody and another after being released from jail temporarily [REDACTED]

Comment: Pressures within the armed forces probably are behind the unprecedented application of Decree 50 to criminal activity by military personnel. Military courts probably will limit the scope of the investigation, which could tarnish the international image of justice in El Salvador. Civilian investigators were making progress in developing evidence implicating Staben, Zacapa, and at least 20 others. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
13 NOV 87

**EL SALVADOR: New Killings Plague Government**

Three well-publicized killings in El Salvador in recent weeks are probably unrelated, but they may presage a resurgence of politically motivated murders as elections slated for next spring draw near. The two most recent victims appear to be farmworkers, whose murders, [REDACTED] may have been a common crime disguised to appear politically motivated. The government has made little progress in investigating the killing of a prominent leftist human rights activist late last month. His death derailed government negotiations with the rebels. Meanwhile, a recent UN study accuses the insurgents of widespread summary executions of civilians and indicates that political killings of civilians by the military continue to decline [REDACTED]

Comment: Both the extreme left and radical right benefit from such killings, which both discourage leftists now in exile from returning to participate in next year's legislative elections and serve as a pretext for the insurgents to avoid meaningful peace negotiations. On balance, however, the left gains more in propaganda terms when a prominent leftist activist is killed, because the government is almost always blamed for such murders, even though government links to rightwing extremist groups have been dramatically reduced since 1984. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

## El Salvador: Managing the Military

### Introduction

The Army's willingness to back democratic institutions has been vital to the stability of civilian government in El Salvador since 1984. Most recently, impartial military support for constitutional civilian procedures was reemphasized during orderly legislative and municipal elections on 20 March 1988 that resulted in the ruling party's surrendering its majority control of the legislature for the first time in Salvadoran history. Nevertheless, long-term Army backing for an elected government is far from assured, particularly should key officers perceive dwindling US military assistance as reflecting declining US interest in institutionalized civilian rule in El Salvador and elsewhere in the region.

This paper examines the working relationship between the military and elected officials in El Salvador, their attitudes toward each other, the key issues that affect the relationship, and pressures within the political parties and the armed forces that could derail what has until now been a prescription for stability. Finally, the paper assesses the prospects for continued Army backing of the civilian government and the implications for US interests.

### Civil-Military Relations Under Duarte

The key question President Jose Napoleon Duarte faced following his election in 1984 was the degree of tolerance the military would have for civilian government. Fifty years of repressive rule by the military—which exercised authority primarily to protect the interests of the upper class—had exacerbated tensions between the small, landed elite and the large, disenfranchised worker-peasant class, which profited little from the economic boom of the 1960s and 1970s. As political polarization increased and became more violent, El Salvador's military regimes resorted to political killings and official intimidation—Duarte was himself a victim of military torture and exile in the early 1970s—to maintain control.

By 1980 the international legitimacy and domestic credibility of the political process in El Salvador were seriously eroded, and the newly organized guerrilla fronts were seen by many intellectuals and the working class as the only alternative to continued government repression. The installation of an elected Constituent Assembly in 1982 to replace a military-installed junta marked the beginning of the US-nurtured move toward democratic rule that culminated in Duarte's election.



guerrillas during Operation Montecruz, which began in May 1987, Duarte signed the Central American peace accord. [redacted] indicates the President considers such initiatives less risky when they follow military successes because the officer corps is buoyed—and distracted—by its accomplishments and less likely to focus on political issues. [redacted]

Military tolerance for civilian government has been encouraged by the recognition that US military assistance—as well as Duarte's willingness to dedicate a large portion of domestic spending to support military operations—has been the deciding factor in gaining the upper hand against the insurgency. Salvadoran officers admit privately [redacted] that periodic temptations to intervene politically are tempered by the knowledge that such a move most likely would result in a cutoff of US military aid and training. Similarly, we believe senior officers recognize that public acceptance of decisions to devote a larger portion of the domestic budget—up to 25 percent since 1984—to security has been facilitated by the fact that the decisions have come from an elected civilian government and not a military regime. [redacted]

#### Civilian Perceptions of the Military

Despite success in getting the Army to acquiesce to the authority of Duarte's administration, [redacted] indicates that the President and leaders of his ruling Christian Democratic Party have periodically become suspicious that the armed forces harbor significant numbers of anticivilian hardliners. They also have worried that rightwing political parties and conservative businessmen retained undue influence among these officers and might foment unrest within the military. [redacted]

[redacted] for instance, that a retired officer belonging to one of the rightwing opposition parties was lobbying among active-duty military officers for a coup. [redacted] that another extreme rightwing group had raised money to buy support among the military for ousting Duarte. Nevertheless, the High Command publicly continued to deny any involvement in politics, and the officer corps privately rejected these rightist attempts to draw the military into political intervention. [redacted]

In our judgment, four years of relatively consistent military backing in the face of repeated economic and political crises have reassured Duarte and his administration that the Army High Command has little interest in undercutting the government. In fact, the High Command has often taken the side of the Christian Democrats—we believe more to ensure stability than out of fondness for the ruling party—in policy confrontations with rightwing politicians and the business sector. [redacted]

[redacted] his support has repeatedly angered conservatives, who feel their interests are no longer being protected by the officer corps. [redacted]

The military's willingness to back the democratic process and remain largely aloof from politics has reinforced positive attitudes among civilians toward the armed forces. Besides allowing the country's first elected center-left civilian government to take power in 1984, the Army [redacted] strongly opposed efforts by the conservative parties to characterize the 1985 legislative elections as fraudulent and blocked efforts to overturn the results. The military's acceptance of the decisive conservative victory in the March 1988 legislative and municipal elections, on the other hand, is ameliorating longstanding rightwing suspicions that the High Command has sided only with the ruling party. [redacted]

#### Residual Military Unhappiness

Despite the High Command's commitment to democracy, many within the armed forces continue to view civilian government as poorly administered, rife with corruption and incompetence, and plagued by petty political bickering among the political parties. [redacted]

[redacted] that civil-military relations had reached their lowest ebb since Duarte's election following a three-month boycott of the Legislative Assembly by the conservative parties, a rightwing business strike, and Duarte's unilateral decision not to renew suspended state-of-emergency legislation. Subsequent improvement in relations with the Christian Democrats [redacted] came largely because most officers believed that no other political party had the popular support or leadership to run the country more efficiently. [redacted]

## *The Money Elite and the Military*

In our judgment, one of the most noteworthy changes in Salvadoran society over the last several years has been the deterioration in the relationship between the military and the country's most affluent and conservative families. Traditionally, the military ruled the nation on behalf of the oligarchy. Moneyed families often provided financial support for cadets from humble backgrounds, and as they rose through the ranks, these officers were expected to serve their patrons' interests.

The 1979 coup—which brought to power a group of reform-minded officers who saw breaking the power of the oligarchy as necessary to prevent the country from falling to the burgeoning guerrilla movement—illustrated that an important section of the military no longer equated its interests with those of the upper class. The new attitude was underscored in 1980 when the military initiated the first significant agrarian reforms by sending troops to remove wealthy landowners forcibly from their plantations and to seize their banks.

The privileged class continues to support the armed forces as a barrier to Marxist insurgents coming to power. Nonetheless, reports that

many rich Salvadorans hold the military in contempt and argue that it is one of the country's most serious problems. The wealthy maintain—often publicly—that the officer corps has no interest in a quick end to the war because that would result in an end to US military aid, a reduction in the size of the Army, and a loss of officers' perquisites and opportunities for corruption. Further, although few rich apply, they argue that the High Command rejects officer candidates from the upper class, fearing they will come to dominate the institution. In our judgment, these attitudes are generally motivated by political frustration growing out of the belief that the military has cast its lot with Christian Democratic reformists.

military attitudes toward the moneyed elite are equally negative. Many officers consider the upper class greedy and unpatriotic because of its tax evasion and opposition to new tax measures intended to fund the war. Many officers attribute the refusal of wealthy families to allow their children to join the Army to narrow, self-serving interests.

Many hardline officers believe that Duarte and the Christian Democrats have used military support as a political shield during confrontations with the right-wing opposition—making the military appear a tacit ally of the ruling party. For example, that, following the imposition of an unpopular economic reform package in 1986, Duarte warned conservatives in a private meeting that the military would not tolerate attempts to incite public disturbances. indicate that the right wing believes that Duarte can count on the Army to support him during political crises.

that hardline officers also feel civilian leaders do not sufficiently value the opinions of the military on political matters of national importance. Many officers view the Army's relationship to the administration as collegial rather than hierarchical and resent any effort by the civilians to implement policy without prior consultation. When Duarte has been sensitive to these concerns, friction has been minimized. In 1986 and 1987, for example, the President enlisted military support before implementing controversial economic austerity and tax packages.

# ARENILLAS

ESTE AÑO LOS SOLDADOS  
PUEDEN VOTAR



Figure 1. Rightwing political cartoon showing General Blonden (standing) and President Duarte (on knees).

Blonden: "This year the soldiers can vote."  
Duarte: "No, please! Don't vote for me!"  
This cartoon uses a play on words. In spoken Spanish, Duarte's comment can also be interpreted to mean, "Don't throw me out."

## Assessing Key Issues

Despite generally good working relations between the civilian and the military, several issues remain potentially troublesome. The scheduling of a presidential election in 1989 and a changed political climate since the ruling party lost control of the Legislative Assembly in March 1988 may provoke changes in several sensitive areas that could create fissures between the Duarte government and the officer corps.

## Military Funding

Increasing political pressures from the public for more government spending on social programs and rural development projects are conflicting with the military's requirement for continued funding to fight the insurgency. We believe Duarte has so far been willing to earmark a large portion of the budget to the military—in hopes of buying military loyalty—in the belief that political costs were low because his party's traditional worker-peasant constituency had no realistic alternative to supporting the ruling Christian Democrats. The electoral success of the rightwing political opposition in the March elections, however, demonstrated that Salvadoran voters are impatient for improved living standards.

## Human Rights

Duarte's efforts to end human rights abuses are a continuing irritant in civil-military relations. While allowing the Army wide latitude on internal human and counterinsurgency operations, the administration has insisted on the strict observation of the human rights of prisoners and civilian noncombatants. Duarte also has blocked the appointment of officers suspected of continuing human rights violations to positions of increased responsibility.

For instance, then during the election in 1987 Duarte prevented the assignment upward of a battalion commander notorious for his antiadministration views and suspected of summary executions of suspected insurgents.

Moreover, the armed forces continue to resist government attempts to investigate human rights abuses by military officers. [redacted] indicates the Army has systematically protected or covered up for officers alleged to have participated in political killings earlier in the decade. One group of middle-level officers—the powerful military academy class of 1966, known as the *Sinfonía rojita*—has been particularly active in opposing efforts to pursue investigations of officers' abuses. When one *Sinfonía* colonel was arrested for involvement in a kidnapping-for-profit ring in mid-1986, the group successfully pressured [redacted]

## The Sinfonica Tenda—A Study in Cohesion

The military academy class (tanda) of 1966—nicknamed the Sinfonica (symphony) because of its large size in comparison with other classes of the time—is remarkable for its cohesiveness, influence, and the number of key Army commands it controls.

What the Sinfonica is extremely protective of its members and has close ties to Minister of Defense Vides Casanova, a former instructor at the academy. This group of colonels controls four of six brigades, all eight military detachments, and four of the six General Staff positions.

In our judgment, the Sinfonica is potentially a major obstacle to the consolidation of civilian authority; paradoxically, it also has been a key aid in maintaining the civilians in power. Many of its officers were labeled extreme rightists in the early 1980s, and some are alleged to have been involved in rightwing death squad activity and coup plotting during that period. Critics of the Duarte administration repeatedly have pointed to the failure of the government to prosecute these officers as

evidence of continuing military links to the death squads. In addition, [redacted] has indicated that Sinfonica members are more inclined to political involvement and more critical of civilian rule than their superiors.

We believe, however, that the Sinfonica has at the same time been instrumental in maintaining military support for the Duarte administration.

[redacted] indicates General Vides Casanova uses his close ties to the colonels of the Sinfonica to explain civilian policy decisions, lobby for their support, and pressure Sinfonica members to calm potentially dissident officers. In addition, the 1966 tanda has so far been willing to act as an intermediary between the civilian administration and High Command on the one hand, and junior and middle-level officers on the other. [redacted] indicates this group of colonels—although often cynical about democracy—seems content, for the present, with civilian government.

[redacted] for his release, [redacted] Duarte repeatedly has found it necessary to block Sinfonica efforts to bring the security services—which have become increasingly moderate and are generally more responsive to civilian efforts to investigate human rights cases—under more direct Army control.

### Economic Conditions and Public Disorder

Declining economic conditions, in particular in urban areas, have given rise to political pressures from both the right and left that periodically spark concerns within the armed forces. Early last year, for example, officers were critical of Duarte's inability to end a rightwing legislative boycott provoked by a proposed economic and tax reform package. Leftist demonstrations and urban violence have caused friction between a civilian government concerned about its international image and determined to prevent police overreaction and a military establishment intent on preventing

guerrilla urban activities.

[redacted] indicated that the reluctance of the police to use force to prevent street violence by Communist front groups caused significant discontent among hardline officers. This [redacted] suggests such police inaction also caused many voters to turn against the ruling party during the March elections.

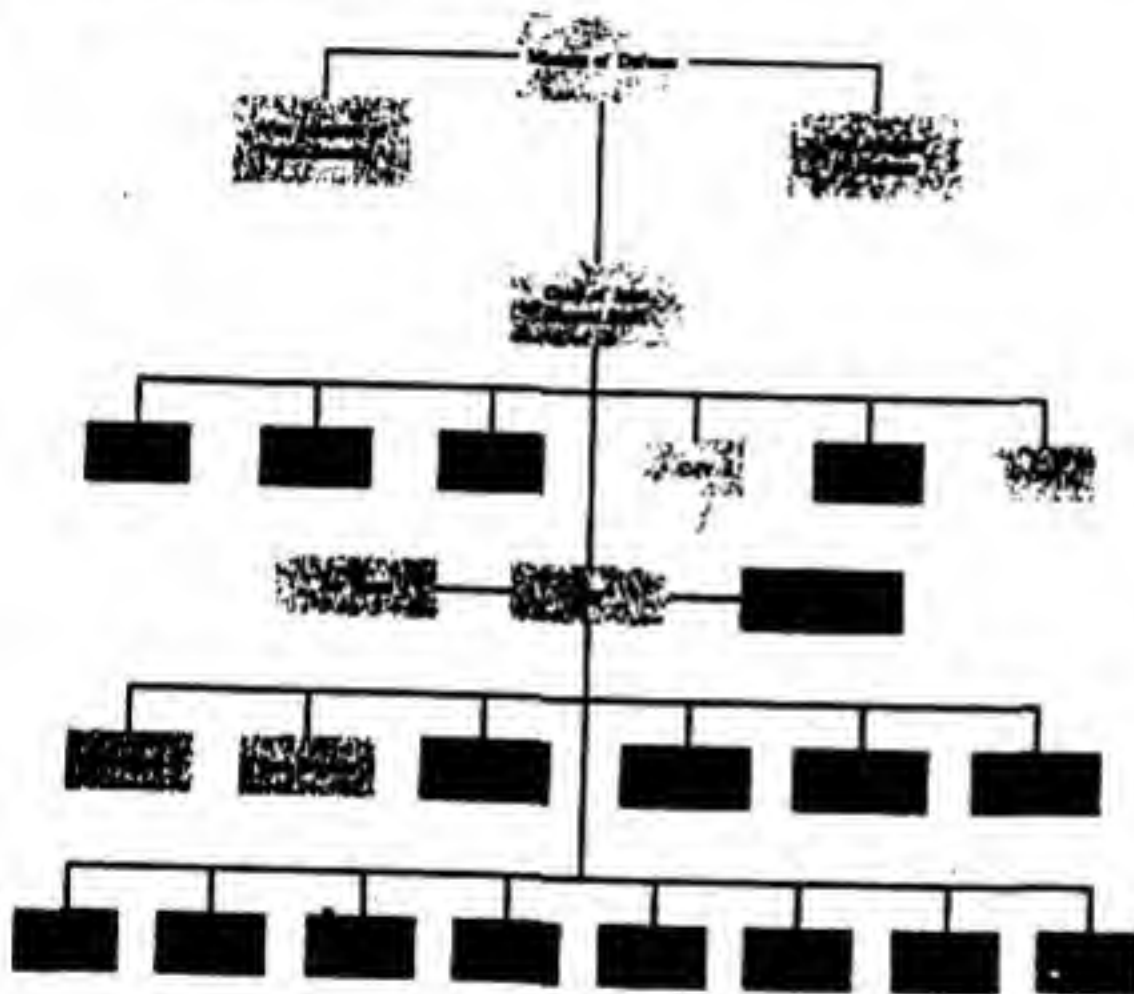
### Maneuvering for the Transition

In our judgment, the defeat suffered by the ruling Christian Democrats in the March 1988 elections will engender significant anxiety within the armed forces. Before the election, most observers believed Duarte's party was the one most likely to win the 1988

Figure 2

Extent of *Sinjonica* Influence Within Armed Forces Chain of Command

■ Commanded by a *Sinjonica* family member



DM Military Organization

\* There are three administrative commands, but none belong to the *Sinjonica* family.

\* There is no Army commandant-in-chief (the Army is commanded by the Chief of the General Staff).



many of whom have returned from self-exile to live openly in the capital—have refused to sever their longstanding ties to the insurgency. [redacted] has indicated increasing dissatisfaction within the officer corps over the freedom of the left to participate in the democratic process while supporting armed groups trying to seize power through force. Further, some officers may fear that, if the legislature performs as poorly under the right as under the Christian Democrats, a disenchanted public may turn to the left. Army anxieties are tempered somewhat because the left—which chose not to run in the March 1988 elections—faces significant funding problems, remains disorganized, and seems unlikely to make a credible electoral showing in the near term. [redacted]

#### Preserving Equities Within the Military

We believe the High Command recognizes the need to begin to replace key officers—some of whom have held their jobs since before Duarte's election and are anxious to retire—before the 1989 elections. Their efforts have been stalled, however, because Duarte has insisted [redacted] that top leaders such as Gustavo Vides Caceres and Blandon remain in their positions until the end of his term. The President apparently believes no other officers command equal respect and authority, and he is probably concerned that establishing a close working relationship with their replacements during his remaining year in office would be difficult [redacted]

Nevertheless, pressures to retire senior officers continue to mount. The limited opportunities for promotion to general officer has caused some impatience among some senior field-grade officers whose careers are blocked by lack of movement of generals eligible for retirement [redacted] that over the years Vides and Blandon—[redacted] at they repeatedly interceded with officers during various crises between the civilians and the Army—lost much of their original credibility among the officer corps, which has come to view them as spokesmen for the civilian administration. Finally, in the midst of these growing pressures Duarte probably recognizes that, if key personnel changes are made well before the election, he can play an influential role. He will want the High Command to choose moderate officers who support civilian rule rather than hardliners who might attempt to play a more sensitive role in government policy-making [redacted]

#### Outlook

In our judgment, the officer corps is likely to provide backing for a civilian government at least through the end of Duarte's final year in office. The evidence provided by the first four years of civilian rule indicates that the armed forces have established a firm working relationship with the civilians that is sufficiently flexible during periods of political instability



and crisis. We believe Duarte, viewing his relations with senior officers as a top priority, will continue to employ the techniques he has used to placate the military over the past four years. Thus, he is likely to remain generally aloof from internal military affairs, avoid policies that could be perceived as threatening to the integrity of the officer corps, and allow the military a relatively free hand in its conduct of the war.

We believe civil-military relations will continue to be tested in the period leading up to the presidential election. A contentious relationship between the conservative-dominated legislature and the executive—and the administrative inertia and increased political bickering that result—will reinforce doubts in the military about the ability of the civilians to govern. Although Duarte may attempt some bureaucratic housecleaning and administrative reform to improve his party's image before the presidential election, general preoccupation with preparations for the campaign will be a significant distraction from the business of governing, and military sympathy for civilian rule is not likely to be enhanced over the next year. Should the officer corps perceive the ruling party is headed for another electoral loss, senior and middle-level officers may become less inclined to bend to civilian executive authority as the Army positions itself politically for a conservative win next year.

In our judgment, political uncertainty will spur efforts by the Army to make key and long-expected reassignments among the High Command. By making such changes well before the 1989 election, senior officers can ensure continuity within the General Staff during the presidential transition, as well as preserve the principle of military preeminence in internal personnel matters. Finally, a timely shuffle of the General Staff would avoid leaving the new president to face wholesale and potentially contentious and destabilizing personnel changes.

Another critical test for civil-military relations will come following the 1989 election. While the military probably will accept any candidate who wins in a free election, the new president will need quickly to establish good relations with key senior officers and reassure the military that he intends to continue Duarte's

#### Coup Factors

In our judgment, a military coup, while always possible, is not probable. [redacted] suggested that only civilian political interference directly threatening the integrity of the military institution, or inept policymaking that undermined the constitution, would produce a coup. So far, the Duarte administration has kept well within safe bounds on these two issues. Indeed, the only serious coup rumors have come about not as a result of unhappiness over allegations of corruption or lack of movement on serious economic reform, but when the Duarte administration attempted to influence military promotions or attempted negotiations with the guerrillas that the military perceived might lead to power-sharing.

We believe the military is further constrained from launching a coup by the realization that it probably would cause a US aid cutoff, as well as seriously distract military resources from the war.

[redacted] for instance, that the police—staffed by politically active police officers—are loyal to Duarte and would be likely to resist a coup attempt. In addition, the strategic First Brigade, located in the capital, has traditionally been headed by politically neutral or pro-Duarte commanders who would more likely follow the lead of the General Staff than dissident officers attempting a coup. [redacted] few officers would associate with a coup that would result in military or police casualties, or that would divide or weaken the military institution.

policy of periodic consultation. In addition, the new president will have to improve on Duarte's weak administrative performance and make some effort to demonstrate serious intent to correct bureaucratic lassitude, incompetence, and corruption. We believe the military would accept a rightwing victory, despite fears of political restructuring of the officer corps through wholesale reassignments and forced resignations.

As in the past, antipathy for civilian rule is most likely to come from field-grade officers and their subordinates. The degree to which unhappiness at the middle level can be controlled will depend largely on the ability and willingness of senior officers—many of whom may be relatively new to their jobs—to intercede on behalf of the civilians. By almost all accounts, field-grade officers—in particular the class of 1966—have enough cohesiveness to act in unison should they perceive a civilian threat to internal military autonomy or determine that policies of the new president were seriously undermining political stability. Given these conditions, we believe that many junior officers would look to the *Staffone* to take the lead in confronting the General Staff with demands for changes in civilian policy or in launching a coup.

#### Implications for the United States

We believe that perceptions of a declining US commitment to foster civilian government in the region would prompt the officer corps to become more involved in politics. [redacted] indicates that reduced US funding for the Nicaraguan insurgents and for El Salvador has caused the Salvadoran military to question US resolve in Central America. If public frustrations mount over declining US assistance, the pace of the war, a stagnating

economy, and continued civilian ineptitude, a consensus could well build within the middle and upper classes as well as officer corps to blame Washington, arguing that US policies no longer serve the national interest. Some might point to Guatemala as an example of a Central American country that defeated an insurgency—albeit under an extremely repressive military government and at an enormous human cost—with no significant US assistance.

A coup, even if disguised by the retention of a civilian figurehead as chief of state, would be widely perceived as a defeat for US policy in the region. In our judgment, the nascent Central American democracies would view such a development as a failure of US resolve and policy, and the militaries of [redacted] might feel less constrained to launch similar coups reflecting their frustrations in dealing with civilian institutions.

Directorate of Intelligence  
Office of African and Latin American Analysis

30 November 1988

Mr. Kevin Whitaker  
Office of Inter-American Affairs  
Department of State

Dear Mr. Whitaker,

Enclosed is the chronology of Salvadoran guerrilla human rights abuses and terrorist incidents you requested on 16 November.

Reflecting our telephone conversations with you, the chronology is presented in raw data format. Each entry is classified and sourced to facilitate extracting unclassified data or pursuing declassification as your needs dictate.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached on [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Chief, [REDACTED]

Enclosure

Directorate of Intelligence  
Office of African and Latin American Analysis

30 November 1988

Mr. David Pacelli  
Director, Latin American Affairs  
National Security Council

Dear David,

Enclosed is a chronology of Salvadoran guerrilla human rights abuse and terrorist incidents in raw data format.

The chronology was prepared at the request of State, but we are forwarding it to you as a supplement to our recent typescript on FMLN Strategy and human rights abuses.

Chief, [REDACTED]

Enclosure

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

CHRONOLOGY OF SALVADORAN GUERRILLA HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES,  
TERRORISM, AND URBAN VIOLENCE, 1988

3 Jan: A group of armed men, who identified themselves as members of the FMLN, kidnaped incumbent Mayor Jesus Israel Santamaria of Agua Caliente, Chalatenango Department and mayoral candidate Jose Francisco Echeverria of the same town. The two men were released on 8 Jan. [REDACTED]

10 Jan: Suspected FMLN guerrillas abducted Mauricio Ortiz Mejia, one of the Central Elections Council delegates in Cuscatlan Department. [REDACTED]

14 Jan: A vehicle of the US Embassy's contract security guard company (Wackenhut) patrolling in San Salvador was fired upon by two suspected FMLN guerrillas armed with M-16 and G-3 rifles. [REDACTED]

24 Jan: [REDACTED] unit of the FPL--one of the five factions of the FMLN--entered the [REDACTED] refugee camp in Honduras and abducted and later executed five FPL deserters. [REDACTED]

26 Jan: FMLN guerrillas in Morazan Department executed two peasant brothers, Juan Martinez Portillo and Ismael Portillo, in front of their families and neighbors. Witnesses say the two were killed because--despite guerrilla warnings--they had obtained their "voting carnets" required to vote in the March 1988 elections. After killing the brothers, the guerrillas stuffed the carnets into their mouths and warned the families that they too would be killed if they removed them. [REDACTED]

11 Feb: FMLN guerrillas set off a bomb in a Health Ministry office in the capital; no one was injured. [REDACTED]

12 Feb: A US Embassy (Wackenhut) patrol vehicle operating in the capital was fired upon by two suspected FMLN guerrillas armed with a revolver. [REDACTED]

\* \* \*

\* Incidents cited here have been reported either through official [REDACTED] channels or in the open press. Instances of urban violence directed against the Salvadoran Armed Forces specifically have not been included.

[REDACTED]

19 Feb: FMLN guerrillas kidnaped Manuel de Jesus Guardado Mendoza, PDC mayoral candidate for Alegria, Usulután Department. [REDACTED]

19 Feb: FMLN guerrillas abducted Ricardo Battle Araujo, bill collector for the local electric and water companies, from his home in Alegria, Usulután Department. [REDACTED]

19 Feb: FMLN guerrillas unsuccessfully attempted to kidnap Gerardo Salvador Mejia Martinez, ARENA mayoral candidate for Alegria, Usulután Department. [REDACTED]

19 Feb: FMLN guerrillas unsuccessfully tried to kidnap Francisco Rodriguez Medina, postmaster for Alegria, Usulután Department. [REDACTED]

19 Feb: Senior FMLN Commandante Roberto Roca stated in a Radio Venceremos broadcast that US military and civilian advisers were now legitimate targets of the FMLN. [REDACTED]

20 Feb: Following a firefight with FMLN guerrillas, Salvadoran Army troops stationed near the capital recovered four explosive devices concealed in baby bottles. [REDACTED]

22 Feb: Four young women--Xenia Marisol Lopez Molina, 19, Custodia de Jesus Rivas Castro, 22, Rosa Candida Martinez, 22, and Celia Marroquin Lopez, approximately 20--were killed when guerrillas machinegunned a bus carrying 50 textile workers. The bus was hit by over 50 rounds of automatic weapons fire. The incident occurred during an FMLN transportation stoppage campaign. [REDACTED]

24 Feb: [REDACTED] stated that the FMLN leadership has issued orders to identify US military and civilian advisers for subsequent assassination by FMLN "urban commandos." [REDACTED]

4 Mar: A US Embassy (Wackenhut) patrol vehicle operating in the capital was attacked by a suspected FMLN guerrilla using a hand grenade. [REDACTED]

11 Mar: FMLN guerrillas detonated two car bombs in the Zona Rosa district of San Salvador, causing property damage and inflicting minor injuries on two children. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

15 Mar: FMLN guerrillas detonated seven bombs directed against telephone junction boxes and power poles in San Salvador. [REDACTED]

16 Mar: FMLN guerrillas detonated a bomb in the lobby of the Vieytez Movie Theater in San Salvador, destroying one wall of the building. [REDACTED]

17 Mar: FMLN guerrillas kidnaped and later killed Sergio Romero, mayor of Azacualpa, Chalatenango Department and destroyed the town hall. In San Miguel de Mercedes, Chalatenango Department, they burned the town hall, courthouse, and post office. [REDACTED]

14 Apr: Guerrillas abducted and killed Pedro Ventura, ARENA mayor-elect of San Isidro, Morazan Department. Several days later, the FMLN admitted to the killing during a radio propaganda broadcast. [REDACTED]

23 Apr: A US Embassy patrol vehicle reports it "may have" been fired upon by the occupants of a passing vehicle. [REDACTED]

26 Apr: A car bomb exploded near a movie theater in San Salvador. Police discovered other explosive devices near the Sheraton Hotel. [REDACTED]

27 Apr: Police discovered and deactivated an explosive device in a vehicle parked near a San Salvador restaurant. [REDACTED]

1 May: Police discovered and deactivated an explosive device concealed in a stolen vehicle parked near the armed forces commissary in San Salvador. [REDACTED]

11 May: First Military Court Judge Jorge Serrano was shot and killed outside his home as he returned from taking his children to school. Serrano had been reviewing cases against rightwing extremists and FMLN guerrillas. [REDACTED]

11 May: FMLN guerrillas assassinated Terencio Rodriguez, the ARENA mayor of Perquin, Morazan Department. [REDACTED]

c. Jun: FMLN guerrillas assassinated Jose Abraham Rivera and Quijano, both students at the University of El Salvador, for suspicion of spying for the US. [REDACTED] guerrillas on campus [REDACTED] planning to carry out additional punitive killings. [REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

c. Jun: FMLN Commandante "Rey Pony" killed two civilians accused of collaborating with government forces in Usulután Department. The bodies were left on public display apparently as a warning to other would-be collaborators.

[REDACTED]

13 Jun: FMLN guerrillas publicly executed 23-year-old Noel Campos Moreira, an ex-soldier, following an FMLN-conducted "town meeting" in San Jorge, San Miguel Department.

[REDACTED]

14 Jun: FMLN guerrillas broke into the home of Apolinario Hernandez Rodriguez, Justice of the Peace for Carolina, San Miguel Department, and shot and killed him in front of his nine-year-old daughter.

[REDACTED]

21 Jul: Six well-planned and coordinated pro-FMLN demonstrations in the capital turned violent, leaving six demonstrators and eight policemen injured, 11 vehicles burned, and several businesses. Some demonstrators exchanged gunfire with security police.

[REDACTED]

25 Jul: Suspected FMLN guerrillas took over a San Salvador bowling alley, robbed the patrons, then set the building on fire.

[REDACTED]

21-22 Aug: Guerrillas kidnaped, severely beat, and later executed Dolores Molina, PDC mayor of Lolotiquillo, Morazan Department. The FMLN took credit for the killing in a subsequent Radio Venceremos radio propaganda broadcast.

[REDACTED]

25 Aug: Two National Police bodyguards for retired Colonel Majano, a noted leftist, were assassinated as they drove the colonel's car through San Salvador. [REDACTED] later admitted that his FMLN urban cell was responsible for the killing, and described the planning and preparation for the crime in detail.

[REDACTED]

4 Sep: A bomb exploded at the YKK zipper factory in Zacamil, near San Salvador, causing minor damage to the building.

[REDACTED]

6 Sep: Two car bombs were detonated and a third deactivated in front of the Ministry of Health in downtown San Salvador.

[REDACTED]

13 Sep: Pro-FMLN demonstrations in San Salvador and Santa Ana turned violent, as demonstrators in both cities directed gunfire at security police. In San Salvador, one policeman

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
was killed and three were wounded; in Santa Ana, four members of the armed forces and one civilian child were wounded. Police confiscated firearms, grenades, molotov cocktails, and other weapons from marchers. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

27 Sep: FMLN guerrillas kidnaped two Salvadoran employees of World Relief, a private voluntary organization that assists displaced persons. One of the employees was released later that day. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

27 Sep: FMLN guerrillas seized and destroyed the Administration for Telecommunications (ANTEL) office in Antigua Cuscatlan, near the capital, in the fifth successful attack on an ANTEL office by the guerrillas in the course of a month. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

27 Sep: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] FMLN guerrillas in San Miguel Department killed a family of four--Esteban Martinez, 34, his wife Santos Angelica Alvarado, 28, and their daughters Reyna Martinez Alvarado, 12 and Ana Graciela Martinez Alvarado, 9--for refusing to cooperate with the FMLN. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

5 Oct: Members of an FMLN student front group beat another student to death on the campus of the National University. The victim was accused of being a police informant. They later wrapped the body in a plastic bag and dumped it along a street several blocks away. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

6 Oct: Suspected FMLN guerrillas fired an East-bloc RPG-2 at an entrance to the Legislative Assembly Building in San Salvador. FMLN "urban commandos" later claimed credit for the incident. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

7 Oct: Suspected FMLN guerrillas in the capital attacked an administrative vehicle belonging to the Wackenhut Corporation, which provides additional security guards for the US Embassy on a contract basis. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

c. 9 Oct: FMLN guerrillas executed Ricardo Soto, a PDC official in Masahuat, Santa Ana Department. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

12 Oct: FMLN bombs damaged the La Torre de Cristal building in San Salvador. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

12 Oct: FMLN guerrillas blew up the administrative offices of a seaside resort in La Paz Department. [REDACTED]

14 Oct: A group of 40 FMLN guerrillas in Morazan Department abducted ten peasants for forced labor in building a new camp. [REDACTED]

14 Oct: Men dressed in camouflage and claiming to be members of the 1st Infantry Brigade forcibly removed four male civilians from their homes north of the capital and executed them with pistol-fire. Cartridge cases found at the scene indicate that the murder weapon was a Soviet-designed Makarov pistol. The 1st Brigade launched an investigation, as did the Catholic Church. On 23 Oct, Tutela Legal, the Catholic Archbishopric's Legal Aid and Human Rights Office, blamed the FMLN for the killings. [REDACTED]

15 Oct: FMLN guerrillas informed the civilian population in Perquin, Morazan Department that all men in the area between the ages of 13 and 35 would begin receiving military training immediately. The guerrillas also forced local residents to purchase various materials used for the construction of homemade explosives. [REDACTED]

17 Oct: At least seven people were injured when an explosive device was thrown at the Mexicanos town hall, located north of the capital. [REDACTED]

17 Oct: A bomb was detonated at the ARENA party headquarters in Santa Tecla, on the outskirts of San Salvador. A security guard was wounded. [REDACTED]

18 Oct: Government security forces discovered and deactivated two bombs placed in cars belonging to the Ministry of Public Works. The cars were parked in front of the Polytechnic University in San Salvador. [REDACTED]

18 Oct: A bomb went off outside a bakery in northern outskirts of the capital. The explosion resulted in property damage, but no injuries. [REDACTED]

18 Oct: A bomb destroyed a van parked in the capital, about one and one half miles northwest of the US Embassy. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

18 Oct: Police deactivated a bomb found approximately one mile from the US Embassy; the bomb reportedly had been thrown from a passing bus. [REDACTED]

18 Oct: Suspected FMLN guerrillas detonated two car bombs, that left nine people injured and damaged a restaurant and shopping mall. [REDACTED]

19 Oct: FMLN Commandante [REDACTED] ordered [REDACTED] families in [REDACTED] Chalatenango Department to leave their homes [REDACTED] or face execution. The families' names were on a list of suspected government collaborators or those deemed anti-FMLN. [REDACTED] guerrillas killed a farmer who defied the order; during the month of October, at least five other civilians were killed by guerrillas for similar reasons. [REDACTED]

21 Oct: Police deactivated an explosive device located six blocks south of the US Embassy. FMLN propaganda leaflets were found near the device. [REDACTED]

25 Oct: FMLN guerrillas abducted and killed Lucio Salvador, the physically-handicapped ARENA mayor of Sociedad, Morazan Department. [REDACTED]

27 Oct: The US AID building in San Salvador was struck by a US-made LAW rocket. [REDACTED]

30 Oct: FMLN guerrillas abducted Jose Alberto Lopez Lopez, PDC mayor of Guatagigagua, Morazan Department, and later executed him. [REDACTED]

31 Oct: FMLN guerrillas assassinated Jose Ulises Hernandez, ARENA mayor of Nueva Granada, Usulután Department. [REDACTED]

1 Nov: Suspected FMLN guerrillas bombed the Quezaltepeque chapter headquarters of ARENA and the PDC. [REDACTED]

3 Nov: Two people were injured by shrapnel from an FMLN bomb planted at a San Salvador electrical power station. [REDACTED]

5 Nov: Suspected FMLN guerrillas fired a US-made M-72 LAW at the Sheraton Hotel in San Salvador, site of the OAS General Assembly meeting Nov 13-19. The rocket struck a service area on the second floor; at the time, over 1,000 people were attending receptions in two ballrooms located



[REDACTED]

below the point of impact. There were no reports of injuries. [REDACTED]

19 Nov: FMLN attacks partially destroyed the mayor's office and the telephone exchange in San Buenaventura, Usulután. [REDACTED]

22 Nov: During an attack on the town of Colon, La Libertad Department, FMLN guerrillas destroyed the mayor's office, telecommunications office, and a gas station. [REDACTED]

24 Nov: Suspected FMLN gunmen fired on the US AID building in San Salvador. [REDACTED]

24 Nov: A civilian, Orlando Guillen, was injured by the impact of one of three propaganda bombs planted around San Salvador. [REDACTED]

24 Nov: FMLN guerrillas used bombs to destroy six government cars parked in a San Salvador garage. The owner of the garage was injured in the incident. [REDACTED]

25 Nov: Guerrillas abducted and later executed Napoleon Alexander Villafuerte, ARENA mayor of Sesori, San Miguel Department. The FMLN took credit for the killing in a subsequent radio propaganda broadcast. [REDACTED]

25 Nov: Three people were wounded in a bomb attack on the home of Daniel Antonio Rivera, the ARENA mayor of Mejicanos, a suburb of San Salvador. [REDACTED]

26 Nov: The daughter of an official of the National Conciliation Party was wounded when suspected FMLN guerrillas threw four grenades as they drove through a San Salvador neighborhood. One grenade exploded near the US Deputy Chief of Mission's home. Remnants of the grenades recovered the next day indicate they were Soviet-made. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

\* \* \*

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8 DEC 88

#### EL SALVADOR: Guerrillas Planning Assassinations

In a bid to discredit the government, Salvadoran insurgents are planning to increase political assassinations. Guerrillas intend to kill a low-ranking member of a human rights organization allied to the insurgency and blame her death on the government and the right. The killing—to occur before the presidential election in March—would be timed to reap maximum propaganda benefit. Rebels also have plans to kill [REDACTED] critical of the current faculty at the National University and to continue assassinating smalltown mayors. [REDACTED]

Comment: [REDACTED] and the insurgents probably are trying to recreate the propaganda success that followed the murder of leftist human rights official Herbert Anaya in October 1987—[REDACTED] by a guerrilla hit team. The insurgents intend to intensify international concerns about human rights abuses should a rightwing administration come to power in San Salvador. They would probably view [REDACTED] death as punishment for his criticism of the university, their principal base in the capital. Rebels already have murdered seven mayors this year in an effort to undermine government authority in outlying areas. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## El Salvador: Rebels Target Mayors

Eight mayors and a provincial governor have been assassinated by guerrillas since the municipal elections last March. In addition, at least 85 mayors, whose lives have been threatened by leftist rebels, have resigned, leaving nearly half of El Salvador without locally elected civilian authority. The guerrilla policy of terrorizing mayors and other local officials seriously threatens government programs aimed at establishing civilian control and winning the hearts and minds of rural Salvadorans. In our view, the assassinations and threats, while significantly undermining local civilian authority, also have contributed to a weakening of popular support for the Salvadoran Marxist insurgents and their political allies.

[redacted] that at least 140 mayors—101 ARENA and 39 Christian Democrats—have received either verbal or written threats.

[redacted] In January that 135 of the 262 municipal mayors in El Salvador were on the verge of resigning in response to those threats, and [redacted] indicate that over 100 of the country's 262 municipalities no longer have resident-elected local officials. In addition to the nine who have been assassinated or have resigned, an unknown number of mayors have moved from their jurisdictions to more secure locations and another 51 posts have remained vacant since the 1988 elections.

[redacted] that ARENA, in an effort to protect its mayors, plans to set up an intelligence network.

### Guerrilla Strategy

The guerrillas have announced that they regard mayors as legitimate targets because they collaborate with the government's counterinsurgency plan, help organize paramilitary groups, and administer civic action programs. We believe the primary goals of the rebels' policy are to dramatize the government's inability to maintain internal security and demonstrate the local power and authority of the insurgency.

[redacted] indicates the guerrillas hope to strain relations between ARENA and the Christian Democrats during the presidential campaign. The rebels have suggested, for example, that the attacks and threats against mayors in some cases are being made by one party against the other. [redacted] believe that the rebels are making most of the threats because the insurgents want to scare people into voting for the leftist Democratic Convergence. [redacted] however, still suspect that some of the threats originate with the Christian Democrats.

### Impact on the Government

The resignations and assassinations of so many officials have created serious problems for the day-to-day administration of the government's civic action program. The often abrupt departure of mayors and the subsequent dissolution of municipal councils have interrupted the flow of millions of dollars in economic assistance and government services. While the military can eventually assume the functions of the civil authorities in most cases, the ability of the government to deliver much-needed services, such as potable water, electric power, schools, medical facilities, and transportation has been seriously eroded in many areas.

### Outlook

The assassination of the governor suggests that the rebels may be expanding their campaign, which we believe could accelerate the cycle of violence by prompting retaliatory rightwing attacks. [redacted] leaders [redacted] are concerned that the guerrillas may begin targeting members of the National Assembly, whom the party has been urging to campaign in their home departments. Moreover, [redacted] plan to develop an armed [redacted] to counter the guerrilla threat may fuel fears of renewed death squad activity. [redacted] that the Anti-Communist

Extermination Association, a rightwing vigilante group, has already announced that it would kill Guillermo Ungo, the Democratic Convergence presidential candidate and others in the leftist coalition, in retaliation for any mayors killed or forced to resign. [REDACTED]

The guerrillas, meanwhile, have come under increasing domestic and international criticism for their use of these and other terrorist tactics. Both the Democratic Convergence, which is officially allied with the guerrillas, and the Catholic Bishops of El Salvador have denounced the insurgents' terrorism. Leftist politicians

fear that the guerrilla actions may spawn a resurgence in rightwing violence, particularly against themselves. Although the Democratic Convergence has publicly condemned the guerrilla tactics against elected officials, [REDACTED] indicates that its failure to disassociate itself from the insurgency will, nonetheless, cost it votes in the 19 March presidential election. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

**DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE**

**El Salvador: Rightist ARENA  
Party Election Frontrunner**

**14 March 1989**

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]



DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

14 March 1989

El Salvador: Pightist ARENA Party Election Frontrunner

## Summary

Following a sweeping victory in legislative and municipal elections a year ago, El Salvador's rightist ARENA party--already in control of the National Assembly--appears best positioned to win the presidency, even if there is a last minute delay in the election scheduled for 19 March. ARENA has successfully exploited widespread popular disaffection with the ruling Christian Democratic Party and worked hard to promote a new, moderate image. Moreover, ARENA's campaign has been the best organized and financed, and presidential candidate Alfredo Cristiani appears to have won the vital support of most businessmen.

We believe ARENA's prospects have not been hurt by the political bickering surrounding the guerrillas' peace plan and various proposals to postpone the election. ARENA, in our view, has adroitly defused attempts by the Christian Democrats to portray it as an obstacle to peace by reiterating its willingness to initiate a dialogue with guerrillas once it wins the election. We believe ARENA--which was in contact with

This typescript was prepared by [redacted] Office of African and Latin American Analysis, with a contribution from [redacted] Office of Leadership Analysis. [redacted]



[REDACTED]

rebel leaders prior to the issuance of the peace proposal--may even win additional votes because of its flexible public position on dialogue. The party, however, remains adamantly opposed to delaying the election. [REDACTED]

ARENA has given only vague hints of what policies it would follow if Cristiani is elected. We doubt, however, that it would move quickly toward a wholesale undoing of President Duarte's economic and social reforms, although rollbacks in some areas are possible. An ARENA government would probably take a tougher position against the left, particularly if, as we anticipate, hardliners like Roberto D'Aubuisson dominate security policy. It may also be less inclined than the current administration to investigate alleged human rights abuses by government forces. At the same time, however, we expect ARENA would try to bolster its moderate credentials and avoid international criticism by initiating talks with the guerrillas and promoting market-oriented economic policies. ARENA, in our view, probably would try to establish a good working relationship with the United States, despite a strong nationalist strain in the party. [REDACTED]

\* \* \*

ARENA has run a well-funded and managed campaign in the runup to the 19 March election. Once an instrument of El Salvador's extreme right, the party has successfully projected a more moderate image while exploiting widespread disaffection with the ruling Christian Democrats. [REDACTED] indicates the message has been well received by voters, who, [REDACTED] indicate, will give ARENA a victory either in the first or second round of balloting. [REDACTED]

#### Election Issues

ARENA's reputation has been an important issue in the campaign. In an effort to ease concern that hardliners control ARENA, the party's extremist founder--and president-for-life--Roberto D'Aubuisson has allowed moderates, headed by presidential candidate Alfredo Cristiani, to assume a wider public role. As a result, [REDACTED] shows that party moderates have attracted new support among moderate businessmen, many of whom had backed the Christian Democrats in 1984. [REDACTED]

ARENA has hit hard at the Christian Democrats' poor handling of the economy and alleged rampant corruption. The party's emphasis on economic themes has been particularly effective in

[REDACTED]

rural areas, where many residents feel neglected by the government and blame the Christian Democrats for the lack of jobs and development assistance. In contrast, ARENA's willingness to use its own resources to bring goods and services to voters has strengthened its image. ARENA's anti-corruption theme has struck a responsive chord countrywide. Although we cannot fully assess the pervasiveness of corruption under the Christian Democrats, the ruling party's poor image and its failure to act on allegations of official misdeeds have allowed ARENA to capitalize on the issue. [REDACTED]

We believe ARENA's hammering of the Christian Democrats for the government's seeming inability to provide public security in the face of growing leftist violence also has been a highly successful theme. In contrast to the perceived failure of the Christian Democrats to remedy the security situation, we judge that the public believes ARENA would adopt a tougher posture toward violent demonstrators and those suspected of terrorism and sabotage. [REDACTED]

#### Maneuvering on the Rebel Peace Proposal

ARENA began the campaign by portraying itself as the party that was willing to talk to the guerrillas and was most likely to bring peace to war-weary Salvadorans, and it retained that image even after the rebels introduced their "peace initiative" on 24 January. Despite attempts by the Christian Democrats to cast ARENA as anti-peace because of its refusal to postpone the election, we believe ARENA may have reaped the most benefits from the recent flurry of proposals and counterproposals. ARENA, in our view, largely has out-maneuvered other parties by maintaining a firm stand against the guerrilla demand to delay the election, which would have violated the constitution. In contrast to the government's wavering on that issue and on whether to conduct a dialogue with the guerrillas, ARENA appeared decisive by presenting a counterproposal on 31 January to meet with rebel leaders. ARENA leaders, in fact, had met secretly with guerrilla commanders before the proposal was announced. ARENA's repeated calls for a dialogue, in our view, have helped bolster the party's peace credentials. [REDACTED]

#### Who Controls ARENA?

We believe D'Aubuisson continues to be the most important policymaker in ARENA, although the jockeying between moderate and conservative factions of the party will likely intensify if ARENA comes to power. D'Aubuisson's public deference to Cristiani is largely cosmetic in our view, calculated to put a better face on the party. [REDACTED] that D'Aubuisson remains in firm control and that Cristiani often defers to him on party matters and decisions relating to the

[REDACTED]

campaign. We believe, however, that D'Aubuisson has grown more politically astute since he lost to President Duarte in the election of 1984 and almost certainly realizes that his party's past extremism is not appealing to an electorate weary of war and violence. [REDACTED]

D'Aubuisson's influence over the party would almost certainly carry over to an ARENA government, although the exact role he would play is still unclear. D'Aubuisson is not likely to hold a cabinet position, but he will have a direct impact on policy through his seat in the Assembly and his role in the party. D'Aubuisson will probably not be engaged equally on all issues. For example, we expect Cristiani--a prominent businessman--and other moderates to have a relatively free hand in formulating economic and social policies and in choosing a cabinet. D'Aubuisson, on the other hand, probably will have greater impact on security issues and policies toward the left. [REDACTED]

#### ARENA Looks Ahead

ARENA leaders probably will come under pressure from business men--who have largely funded the party's campaign--to roll back some social and economic reforms and reduce government management of the economy. ARENA does not appear inclined to move quickly, however, and [REDACTED] indicates that there is no party consensus on specific economic policies. Cristiani and others have said publicly that ARENA will relax state controls on marketing and banking, but party leaders are not advocating immediate abolition of INCAFE, the government's coffee marketing agency, or overnight privatization of the banking system. In addition, their public statements suggest ARENA leaders continue to view land reform as sacrosanct and are advocating a reassessment, rather than a dismantling, of inefficient government-run cooperatives. ARENA has hinted at possible structural changes, such as tax reforms and currency devaluation, to address the fiscal deficit, but it probably will move slowly to avoid straining relations with the private sector, whose backing will remain vital for the new administration. [REDACTED]

We believe ARENA in the near term will not take any drastic steps to alter the conduct of the war or resort to violent tactics to control the left. If frustrated by the course of the war, however, an ARENA government could seek dramatic gains against the insurgency by resurrecting death squads. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] indicates that most ARENA officials, including D'Aubuisson, recognize the importance of US assistance--and its linkage to an acceptable human rights record. In addition, most ARENA officials probably realize that the military--which has made significant progress on the human rights front--will not

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

sanction any initiatives that it believes could jeopardize US military and economic support. The armed forces, in our view, will continue to resist interference from civilians, even conservative ones, and will have a *de facto* veto over major changes in strategy--as well as political concessions to the guerrillas. [REDACTED]

We expect an ARENA government to reintroduce legislation--which lapsed in 1987--limiting civil liberties for suspected guerrillas. Such a move would facilitate operations by military and security services, which are increasingly frustrated by the current government's reluctance to deal aggressively with the insurgents. [REDACTED] suggest that an ARENA government is likely to crack down on guerrilla front groups, particularly the rebel-controlled university in San Salvador. Sensitive to international criticism, however, ARENA probably will try to balance these actions with attempts to initiate a dialogue with the insurgents. [REDACTED]

The emergence of an ARENA government--regardless of its security policy--is likely to encourage vigilante activity. For example, right-wing extremists may view an ARENA victory as a signal that death squad activity would be tolerated, even though ARENA would officially disavow such connection. ARENA, however, probably would be less inclined than the current government to investigate alleged political crimes by the right or to punish offenders. [REDACTED]

ARENA probably will seek a smooth working relationship with the United States, although there will almost certainly be more bilateral friction in their relationship than between Washington and the Christian Democrat administration. We believe that an ARENA government will be intent on retaining present levels of US aid and will temper its language accordingly, even though D'Aubuisson and others have in the past indulged in shrill anti-American rhetoric. Some party officials, for example, already have sounded out potential cabinet appointees with US officials in an effort to assuage concerns that ARENA will move to diminish US influence in El Salvador. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ALA/MCD  
[REDACTED]

31 March 1989

THE SITUATION IN  
CENTRAL AMERICA

Over the past month, the Central American governments have moved forward on the peace process and El Salvador has elected a new president. Both issues remain high policy concerns for the United States. [REDACTED]

The Central American Peace Process

11/11/89

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]



### Situation in El Salvador

Finally, the election of a new President in El Salvador has altered the political equation there and raised concerns about the ARENA government's policies. Even before he assumes office on 1 June, President elect-Alfredo Cristiani--aware of US uncertainties about ARENA's policies on human rights<sup>8</sup>--will try to reassure Washington about his commitment to prevent the resurgence of rightwing death squad activity. Cristiani is in Washington this week for meetings with US officials.

- Despite Cristiani's desire to maintain ARENA's new moderate image, we expect to see an increase in rightwing vigilante activity by extremists who believe ARENA--tied in the past to tactics of violence and intimidation--will tolerate such activity. In addition, Cristiani will be under pressure from his party and many in the military to take a tougher stand against the left, and we expect his government to support legislation rescinding some civil liberties for suspected insurgents.
- Senior military officers, however, are sensitive to US admonishments about human rights and would object to death squad activity that could be blamed on the Army and jeopardize US aid. [REDACTED]

Another major challenge facing Cristiani will be determining the role that the party's extremist founder, Roberto D'Aubuisson, will play in his administration.<sup>10</sup>

- At least for the near term, we expect D'Aubuisson--who was associated with ARENA's death squad activities in the early 1980s--will keep a low public profile to defuse international criticism of the continued presence of hardliners in the party. We do not foresee major clashes between Cristiani and D'Aubuisson over policy in the near term. Both leaders will want to avoid the appearance of an open schism that the rebels and opposition parties could use to challenge ARENA's mandate.
- Nevertheless, D'Aubuisson, who holds a seat in the National Assembly, will continue to be a dominant force in the party. Although he probably will focus on security issues, his legislative role will allow him to influence other policies as well. [REDACTED]

Although unable to seize power militarily and under growing pressure from the Army's improved counterinsurgency efforts, El Salvador's 7,000 Marxist insurgents are likely to continue to launch violent, headline-grabbing, terrorist attacks.<sup>11</sup> The guerrillas will try to portray the government as unable to control urban violence and attempt to tarnish the military's human rights record by provoking harsh over-reactions. The rebels also are likely to follow up their January peace proposal with new initiatives intended to keep the government on the defensive and break bipartisan support for aid to El Salvador.

- [REDACTED] indicate that the insurgents, who previously relied primarily on US-made M-16s, are reequipping their frontline units with AK-47 and AKN assault rifles, possibly in preparation for a major offensive.<sup>12</sup>
- Although the guerrillas claim the new munitions are being purchased from the anti-Sandinista rebels, [REDACTED] thus far indicates most are being shipped from Cuba through Nicaragua. None of the 19 East Bloc assault rifles captured thus far has been traced back to known Contra stocks, but some Contra stocks may trickle into El Salvador given the number of weapons involved in the Contra effort and Managua's capture of several caches of AK-47s [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**[REDACTED]**

[REDACTED]

Particulars of the  
1844

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

Part I  
Feature Articles

El Salvador:  
Challenges Facing the  
ARENA Government

- Although the rightwing ARENA party won a sizable mandate in the presidential election in March—beating the Christian Democrats 54 to 36 percent—and now controls all three branches of the government, President Alfredo Cristiani realizes he must build a political consensus with opposition parties to govern effectively and to prevent the radical left from exploiting political divisions.
- The moderate Cristiani appears to be in control of the party, but the party's extremist faction, headed by party founder Roberto D'Aubuisson, will challenge him. D'Aubuisson probably will keep a low profile on most policy decisions; nevertheless, we expect him to weigh in heavily on security matters.
- Cristiani may have difficulty reconciling demands by conservative businessmen for market-oriented reforms, and a reduced role in the economy with his populist campaign promises to create new jobs and improve housing and education. Failure to meet expectations from an impoverished and war-weary populace could quickly undermine Cristiani's mandate and strengthen the hand of party hardliners.
- Cristiani—whom most of the officer corps supports—has stressed his commitment to human rights, but acts of vigilantism by rightwing extremists could increase. The new administration is not likely to alter significantly the strategy of the 10-year-old war against the Marxist insurgents, but plans to reinstate legislation restricting some civil liberties for suspected terrorists.
- For their part, the 6,000 to 7,000 guerrillas, who have suffered serious military setbacks since the failure of their pre-election offensive, are increasing urban terrorism and assassinations of elected officials. The guerrillas hope these tactics will provoke a backlash that would discredit Cristiani's administration and force the government into negotiations on their terms.



New Political Dynamics

By improving its image and exploiting public disaffection with the performance of the Christian Democrats, ARENA has come to control all three branches of government. This total control, along with the absence of strong opposition parties, should allow ARENA to implement its conservative agenda and has increased fears that it will roll back populist programs. The centrist Christian Democrats, badly divided and lacking strong leaders and clear direction, now have only six of 60 seats in the Assembly and are unlikely to be effective rivals to ARENA. The coalition of three leftist parties, the Democratic Convergence, is also in disarray after winning less than 4 percent of the vote, and does not pose a significant political challenge. Although some political leaders hope to form a broad opposition to ARENA, prospects for a united front appear poor in the near term.

Despite the lack of a strong opposition, ARENA leaders apparently realize that, given political polarization in El Salvador over the war and economic



President Alfredo Cristiani consults with party leaders

issues, they cannot govern effectively without the cooperation of other political parties and interest groups. Cristiani has adopted a consensus style of problem solving that so far appears to be effective. For example, the new government is asking democratic labor leaders—who supported the Christian Democrats in the past two elections—to work with ARENA on solving economic and social problems.

### Who Controls ARENA?

One of Cristiani's early goals is to destroy the impression—especially among international critics—that he is a mere front man for such ARENA hardliners as Roberto D'Aubuisson. The new president almost certainly will try to keep D'Aubuisson in the party—he admits the charismatic D'Aubuisson remains a key factor in the party's ability to retain popular support—while at the same time pushing him and other hardliners to the sidelines on key government appointments and policy issues. Cristiani already has shown a significant degree of independence, especially in the selection of his cabinet.

indicates that, although Cristiani's appointments are largely party loyalists, they are also professional technocrats representative of the party's moderate outlook. In our view, the stock of party moderates has increased with the party's electoral successes and probably can be consolidated further as long as factional rivalries are minimized.

The selection process was not entirely smooth, however, and maneuvering for some key posts highlighted intraparty tensions and underscored the difficulty Cristiani may have marginalizing the hardliners. Attempts by D'Aubuisson and other party hardliners to name Air Force chief Gen. Rafael Bustillo as Defense Minister rather than Army Chief of Staff Col. Emilio Ponce—Cristiani's choice—almost caused a crisis when the Air Force refused for several days to fly missions in support of Army operations. Cristiani's consensus style came to the fore when he named Army General and former Vice Defense Minister Larion as a compromise, but jockeying for position by different factions in the military and ARENA is likely to increase if, as expected, Larion steps down in three to six months.

Although Cristiani will have a relatively free hand running the government, D'Aubuisson remains a powerful player, especially on security matters. We believe D'Aubuisson's public deference to Cristiani is largely cosmetic, calculated to put the best face on ARENA, and that he will not hesitate to use his seat in the Assembly to influence the legislative agenda. D'Aubuisson, however, fears that the guerrillas would exploit any perceived divisions and thus wants to maintain party unity. He will probably avoid public confrontations that could precipitate a crisis in the party.

### First Moves on the Economic Front

Cristiani's first policy priority is to improve an economy devastated by war-related destruction, capital flight, mismanagement, and natural disasters. Although El Salvador is expected to register a seventh consecutive year of modest GDP growth—1.5 percent in 1988—economic advances are not likely to keep pace with the rapid population growth (currently at 2.6 percent annually). Even these modest growth rates remain highly dependent on revenue from external transfers. Salvadoran remittances from the United States totaled \$300-400 million last year, and US





ARENA founder and President  
for Life, Roberto D. Cristiani

economic aid—\$395 million for FY 1989—is equivalent to about 50 percent of El Salvador's budget, much of which is used to offset the direct and indirect damage done by the war.

Given serious revenue shortages, Cristiani will have difficulty meeting both voter expectations for new jobs and improvements in housing, health, and education and business expectations for privatization of the economy and implementation of market-oriented reforms. Wary of the political risks in undoing past populist programs, Cristiani has said his government will not abolish agrarian reform or institute structural changes that would hurt the workers—almost 50 percent of whom are underemployed. Although ARENA is likely to enjoy a short honeymoon period, public perception that the new government favors the business class and landowners at the expense of unemployed workers—a common theme of government opponents—could play into the hands of the rebels who are trying to foment civil unrest through their political and labor front groups.

#### Trying To Improve the Human Rights Record

Cristiani realizes that, because of close international scrutiny and ARENA's poor human rights record in the past, his government must work hard to prevent a reversal of El Salvador's progress in this area. The President and other party officials have affirmed their commitment to human rights during numerous trips

abroad, and [redacted] plan to speed up reforms of the inefficient and corrupt judicial system, which remains an impediment to additional improvements in human rights. Cristiani is also seeking a consensus with other parties for approval of a tightening up of existing laws to control urban violence, [redacted]

Despite widespread charges—mostly from progovernment groups—that rightwing death squads have been resurrected, we cannot confirm the formation of such groups. [redacted]

[redacted] indicates that military leaders would not tolerate killings that could implicate the security forces in human rights abuses, jeopardize continued US assistance, and undermine the legitimacy of the new government. After the assassinations of the Attorney General and Cristiani's Chief of Staff, as well as attacks on other ARENA officials, Cristiani publicly vowed not to retaliate with violence, and thus far the government has kept its word. [redacted]

By calling for dialogue with the rebels even as they continue their campaign of terrorism in the capital, Cristiani probably hopes to maintain the moral high ground and undercut international sympathy for the guerrillas. Nonetheless, some government and military officials—many of whom continue to receive guerrilla death threats—are increasingly angry over the government's inability to prevent such attacks and may take matters into their own hands. [redacted]

#### Status of the War

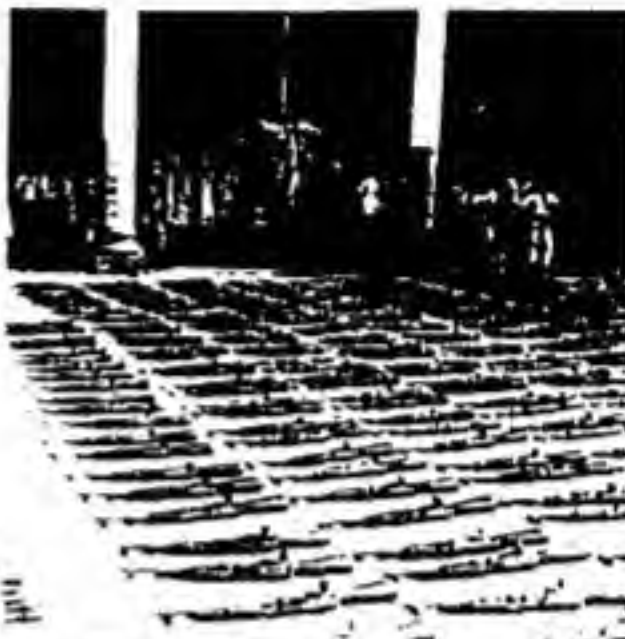
The 6,000 to 7,000 insurgents have gone on the political offensive to marshal opposition to the new government. Although they balked at Cristiani's formation of a multiparty commission to initiate a dialogue, we expect the insurgents will soon put forward proposals of their own. The guerrillas may offer cosmetic concessions, but [redacted] indicate they have no intention of adhering to any

agreement with the government and see dialogue largely as a means to gain domestic and international sympathy.

On the military front, the insurgents are concentrating on assassinations, urban terrorism, economic sabotage, and harassment of military targets, to provoke a violent extrajudicial backlash by the military and, at the same time, erode the government's public standing and force it to enter into negotiations on terms favorable to the guerrillas. Although their attacks have little chance of altering the strategic balance of the war, the guerrillas hope to project an image of strength through highly visible actions in the capital. Moreover, rebel attacks on the economic infrastructure—which have resulted in about \$2 billion worth of damage since 1979—continue to hinder the government's efforts to attract new foreign investment.

The Armed Forces retain the strategic upper hand and have dealt a series of battlefield blows to the rebels. [redacted] indicates the military is successfully pursuing an offensive in guerrilla strongholds in the northern and eastern areas of the country. We believe the guerrillas' recent switch to East Bloc weapons for their front-line operatives reflects the rebels' increasing difficulty in capturing US-made arms from the Salvadoran military and their confidence in continued Cuban and Nicaraguan support. Nevertheless, introduction of these weapons is unlikely to affect the balance of the war. The seizure in May of a large guerrilla cache of new East Bloc weapons and explosives—the largest store of insurgent arms found to date—will possibly cause a temporary reduction in guerrilla urban operations.

Meanwhile, personnel changes in the Armed Forces bode well for Cristiani and the course of the war. Most newly promoted officers are members of the military class of 1966, known as the Tandona, which has generally supported El Salvador's transition to democracy and has been a driving force behind the current counterinsurgency strategy of avoiding indiscriminate bloodshed and improving human rights. Chief of Staff Ponce, who heads the Tandona and is



Large guerrilla cache of East Bloc weapons captured by the Salvadoran Armed Forces  
30 May 1989

likely to be named Defense Minister in three to six months, espouses moderate political views and appears to be Cristiani's chief ally in the military. Ponce is planning to give local commanders more responsibility in order to prosecute the war more effectively.

#### Key Indicators To Watch

**Most Likely Scenario:** Cristiani is able to consolidate his control over the party and the government; his gradual approach to policy implementation bolsters the new government's international legitimacy and dampens charges that he will roll back past reforms and unleash a bloody crackdown on the left; Cristiani also wins points for his peace initiatives, while the guerrillas continue to lose domestic and international sympathy. US and other vital foreign assistance continues.

- D'Aubuisson continues to maintain a low profile; no serious party divisions occur.

- Cristiani moves slowly to implement conservative economic policies and private sector confidence increases, these moves buy time for ARENA to bring about modest economic improvements. No serious, uncontrollable, economic-related civil disorder erupts.
- Although no meaningful government/insurgent dialogue takes place, Cristiani keeps the peace initiative alive. No significant rise occurs in the number of suspicious killings, and the civilian government retains the support of the military.
- The rebels' terrorist acts cost them domestic and international support.

*Alternative Scenario:* A major political crisis occurs—Cristiani's announcement of an extremely unpopular economic policy or even his assassination by

the guerrillas—precipitating a power struggle that puts ARENA hardliners in control. Economic conditions deteriorate and the government fails to control resultant domestic violence, the country becomes almost ungovernable.

- Coffee earnings fall even faster than they have in recent months, a foreign exchange shortage forces the President to reduce imports, which causes the business sector to slow investments.
- Guerrilla terrorism increases, guerrillas successfully mobilize their front groups to foment violent domestic protests, sparking a backlash by extremists in the military and ARENA.
- A resurgence of rightwing death squad activity increases support for the insurgents and undermines the legitimacy of the government, which leads ultimately to a suspension in US and other foreign assistance.
- Opposition parties overcome divisions and form a united front.

[REDACTED]

19 November 1989

SUBJECT: Assassination of Ignacio Ellacuria and Five Other Jesuit Priests

o The assassination of Ignacio Ellacuria and five other Jesuit priests could have been perpetrated by extremists of the left or the right.

Leftist Extremists

o The attack on the priests occurred near the University of Central America (UCA) campus at 0300 hours 16 November 1989.

o Approximately 200 insurgents attacked the Police Academy near Ciudad Merliot, set up roadblocks on the Santa Tecla highway early morning 15 November 1989. Ciudad Merliot is two kilometers southwest of the site where the priests were killed.

o [REDACTED]  
Insurgents in staging areas west of the capital were to try to take over Santa Tecla on 16 November 1989. Santa Tecla is three kilometers west of the UCA.

o Insurgents in staging areas south of the capital, wearing National Police uniforms, were to attack the Armed Forces General Staff (EMC) and National Directorate of Intelligence (DNI) 16 November. They also were to attack the homes of selected individuals. The EMC and DNI is one kilometer north of the UCA.

o Although insurgents from the staging area did not move into the capital, insurgent Urban Commandos also planned to attack the EMC and DNI during the night of 15 November. Increased armed forces security prevented the insurgents from inflicting casualties.

o Public statements by Ellacuria in September and October 1989 differed from earlier declarations, in that they were increasingly favorable to the Salvadoran Government and detrimental to the Salvadoran insurgency.

o On 15 September Ellacuria said President Cristiani has proved to be his own man and not just a puppet of the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) party.

o On 18 September Ellacuria said the insurgents should drop demands that the 1991 elections be moved up; that the FMLN not make postponement of elections a key issue; and expressed skepticism the insurgents can negotiate, integrate into the political process, demobilize troops, and prepare for elections in only one year.

o On 11 October Ellacuria called FpDCAFAM's (insurgent front group) armed takeover of the Costa Rican Embassy a tactical error.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Rightist Extremists

o On 15 November 1989, during a discussion on the insurgent offensive, Roberto D'Aubuisson, Honorary President for Life of ARENA, commented that by the following day (16 November) everything would be taken care of.

o D'Aubuisson berated Jesuit priests teaching at UCA, and accused the priests of brainwashing the students and being responsible for their joining the insurgents.

o D'Aubuisson named several priests at UCA he claimed came to El Salvador only to take over the country. He specifically named UCA Rector Ignacio Ellacuria, among others.

o On the evening of 15 November, Ellacuria and two other priests mentioned by D'Aubuisson were among the six Jesuit priests killed near the UCA campus.

[REDACTED]



EL SALVADOR

Faced With Human Rights Concerns

*Charges of government repression, particularly allegations of military complicity in the murders last week of six Jesuit priests, confront President Cristiani with his greatest political challenge to date; his administration's credibility depends on a quick and thorough investigation and successful prosecution of the guilty parties.*

Cristiani has publicly condemned the murders and has promised to punish the killers, even if they include members of the armed forces. An investigation is under way, and the government has requested assistance from law enforcement agencies in the US, the UK, and Spain.

Although no hard information on the identity of the killers is available, a wide range of groups have already blamed the government. Alleged eyewitnesses to the murders have not come forth. Meanwhile, the rebels have accused the military of causing civilian casualties by indiscriminate aerial attacks.

**Comment:** The murder of the priests threatens to overshadow other issues in El Salvador, including the rebels' responsibility for starting the offensive and their inability to spark an insurrection or reach any of their military objectives. Even if the killers are identified, the limitations of El Salvador's legal system, such as restrictions on using certain types of evidence and the vulnerability of judges to bribery or intimidation, probably will hamper a successful prosecution. If Roberto D'Aubuisson, a popular and well-connected figure in rightwing Salvadoran politics, is involved in the killings as indicate, Cristiani probably also will face great political pressure to protect D'Aubuisson, regardless of concerns about continued US aid. It is highly unlikely Cristiani or senior military leaders are involved.

Charges that the armed forces have indiscriminately attacked civilian areas appear exaggerated. Personnel who toured the neighborhoods where most of the fighting occurred say there is no evidence of indiscriminate bombing by the Air Force, which apparently adhered to strict guidelines from the political and military leadership. Nonetheless, the government probably has underestimated civilian casualties—whether caused by the military or the rebels.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

21 November 1989

[REDACTED]

20 December 1989

[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: INVESTIGATION OF THE KILLING OF THE JESUIT PRIESTS

1. WISH TO PLAY THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE AND POINT OUT WHAT MAY BE AN UNPOPULAR PERSPECTIVE IN THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE KILLING OF THE JESUIT PRIESTS. THUS FAR THE INVESTIGATION, AND PUBLIC RELITY, CONTENDS THAT THE KILLINGS MUST HAVE BEEN PERPETRATED BY THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES, BECAUSE THE ARMED FORCES CONTROLLED THE AREA AROUND THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL AMERICA (UCA), AND THEREFORE NO INSURGENTS COULD HAVE BEEN IN THE AREA OR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KILLINGS.

2. [REDACTED] REPORTING, AND SOME OF THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION, HOWEVER, CLEARLY POINT OUT THAT THE FMLN INSURGENTS WERE IN THE IMMEDIATE OR ADJACENT AREAS OF THE UCA BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE KILLING OF THE JESUIT PRIESTS, 13-16 NOV 89. WHILE ONE CANNOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY OF EXTREME RIGHTIST OR SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES INVOLVEMENT, IT SEEMS THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF INSURGENT RESPONSIBILITY MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED. INSURGENTS FIRED ON LEAF ELEMENTS FROM INSIDE THE UCA COMPLEX 13 NOV. STATION REPORTING PLACED INSURGENT UNITS IN THE AREAS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY, CIUDAD MERLOT, AND PLANS TO ATTACK THE DNI IN THIS SAME TIME FRAME.

A. LT. ESPINOSA (ATLACATL BIRI) REGARDING THE 13 NOV UCA SEARCH, REPORTED HIS UNIT WAS FIRED ON AT APPROXIMATELY 2230 HOURS BY GUERRILLAS INSIDE THE UCA COMPLEX.

[REDACTED]

B. THE FMLN <sup>PLANS</sup> ~~PLANS~~ TO INFILTRATE AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF COMBATANTS INTO SANTA TEXLA <sup>AREA</sup> ~~AREA~~ TO USE THESE LOCATIONS AS STAGING AREAS FOR ATTACKS ON MILITARY UNITS IN THE CAPITAL. ...THESE LSP FORCES <sup>WISH</sup> ~~WISH~~ TO AVOID ARMY UNITS BY COMING INTO THE CITY FROM SANTA TEXLA AND JAJAL. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

C. PRIVATE CITIZENS TELEPHONING SALVADORAN ESAP ELEMENTS IN SAN SALVADOR REPORTED THAT IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON INSURGENTS WERE CAMPING NORTH OF THE ROAD FROM SAN SALVADOR TO SANTA TECLA AT FINCA ESPINO AND CERRILLO MEXILOT. [REDACTED]

D. THE FMLN INTENDS TO OPEN A NEW "DOUBLE FRONT" DURING 14 NOV TO RELIEVE PRESSURE ON UNITS IN THE CITY AND TO PERMIT RESUPPLY. THE NEW OFFENSIVE WILL BEGIN IN THE ZARAGOZA AND SANTA TECLA AREAS SW OF SAN SALVADOR BEFORE 15 NOV 89. [REDACTED]

E. ESAP ANALYSTS ARE CONCERNED THE INSURGENTS MAY FORM A NEW FRONT TO THE SOUTH OF THE CITY. THEY BELIEVE THE ESAP GENERAL STAFF HQS, THE NATIONAL DIRECTORATE (DNI) OF INTELLIGENCE AND ILOPANGO AIR BASE MAY BE THE INSURGENTS PRIMARY TARGETS. ON THE NIGHT OF 13 NOV THE DNI WAS STRUCK BY GUNFIRE FROM THE NORTH, WEST AND SOUTH. ESAP ANALYSTS BELIEVE THIS ACTION MAY HAVE BEEN A PROBE IN PREPARATION FOR AN ASSAULT. [REDACTED]

F. [REDACTED] INFORMATION [REDACTED] ON 13 NOV 89 ABOUT FMLN PLANS TO ATTACK THE DNI HQS AND EMC WAS ACCURATE. [REDACTED] INFORMATION ON THE TIME, DATE AND INSURGENT ROUTE OF APPROACH TO THE TARGETS WAS ACCURATE. [REDACTED] THE ESAP POSITIONED TROOPS IN THE AREA, PREVENTING THE INSURGENTS FROM INFLECTING CASUALTIES AND DAMAGING THE INSTALLATIONS. [REDACTED]

G. INSURGENTS FROM ZARAGOZA AND AN UNIDENTIFIED AREA NEAR THE SAN SALVADOR VOLCANO ARE PLANNING TO MOVE INTO THE SANTA TECLA AREA ON 15 NOV 89 TO ATTACK UNSPECIFIED TARGETS IN SANTA TECLA, AND POSSIBLY TO ATTACK THE DNI. THESE INSURGENTS HAVE 25 NATIONAL POLICE UNIFORMS WHICH SOME OF THE INSURGENTS WILL WEAR TO MOVE INTO SANTA TECLA TOWARD THEIR OBJECTIVES. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] SAID HE WAS TOLD BY HIS INSURGENT SOURCE THAT THE FMLN UNIT WITH NATIONAL POLICE UNIFORMS DID NOT DEPART FROM THE ZARAGOZA AREA.)

Latin America

El Salvador

**A New Round of FMLN Terrorism**

A recent campaign of violence by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) against military personnel and their families—featuring torture and assassinations—is probably an effort to provoke a military crackdown that would

tarish El Salvador's domestic and international image. The FMLN has been adept at using propaganda to swing public opinion against the armed forces and the Cristiani government, which it hopes would lead to a cutoff in all US aid. Moreover, the FMLN leadership probably believes that its demonstrated ability to hit government targets increases its bargaining strength in the current peace talks. While atrocities by government forces—for example, the murder of the six Jesuit priests and two others on 16 November 1980—are widely picked up and used by the media, [redacted] that the government has been lax in documenting and publicizing FMLN violence such as this recent terrorist campaign. [redacted]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]  
6 Jan 90  
[REDACTED]

RESULT CASE - SPECULATION AT THIS POINT, BUT APPEARS THAT COL. BENAVIDES S-2 INT  
AND UNDER HIS COMMAND A COMPANY UNIT CAME FROM THE ATTACK IN, AND TOLD THEM  
TO GO INTO THE UNIVERSITY. APPARENTLY TWO LITS AND GROUP OF SOLDIERS MAY HAVE GONE  
IN. COL. BENAVIDES AND TWO LITS ARE UNDER HOUSE ARREST AT THIS MOMENT AT ORDER  
OF THE PRESIDENT. CECIL TO PRES, DEWITT TO POLICE, MONITORING CLIMAX COULDN'T READ,  
[REDACTED] ALL THINGS IN PLAY, HOPE SOMETHING MAY BREAK ON THIS AND WILL  
SEND WRITTEN ONCE CERTAIN.

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

1 NOV 1991



[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Religious Groups and Their Ties to the FMLN

5. The Armed Forces believe they have discovered a pattern of church-FMLN cooperation and links between guerrillas and religious workers.

-- Most churches are very active helping poor and displaced civilians in conflictive zones where the distinction between civilians and combatants is often fuzzy. On numerous occasions--including during the recent FMLN urban offensive--insurgents often hid in churches, and, usually posing as civilians, sought refuge in church-run shelters.

-- International humanitarian aid workers told [REDACTED] that various churches pass charitable contributions and food donations to known FMLN insurgents, [REDACTED]

-- In late November 1989, [REDACTED] said the Lutheran Church coordinated the return of a group of Salvadoran refugees planning to participate in the FMLN offensive, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that as of 8 November Baptist Church members were stockpiling food, medicines, and supplies for surgery, which the [REDACTED] speculates may have been to support the FMLN during the pending urban offensive. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] indicates a significant portion of FMLN funding does come from churches and church-affiliated social organizations. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] church groups in some cases are aware their donations will reach the guerrillas. Insurgent factions also often infiltrate these organizations or recruit individual clergy in various congregations to raise funds for FMLN-controlled projects. The FMLN raises funds for itself by asking for double the amount of money needed to complete a given project, [REDACTED]

Each FMLN faction [REDACTED] has a special relationship [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Religious Groups and Their Ties to the FMLN

with a particular church--the political wing of the Armed Forces of Liberation, for example, receives the majority of its funds from the Lutheran Church. [REDACTED]

7. Many military and civilian political leaders believe the Jesuits' support for the FMLN is critical to the continued survival of the insurgents. The Jesuits in El Salvador are the dominant intellectual force on the left and taught several FMLN leaders during the 1970s. Their teachings included revolutionary theory. Ignacio Ellacuria, former Rector of UCA and one of the six Jesuit priests slain most likely by members of the military last November, maintained close contact with the insurgent leaders and once boasted that as many as 100 UCA alumni belonged to a FMLN faction. [REDACTED] During the FMLN offensive, the guerrillas [REDACTED] were storing arms at the UCA, and [REDACTED] indicates that the military had [REDACTED] that wounded FMLN fighters were hiding out there.

8. The Catholic Church has played the most important political role of all the churches in El Salvador. Many government and military officials believe that the frequent attempts by Catholic leaders to mediate talks between the FMLN and the government have boosted the guerrillas' political legitimacy both domestically and abroad. Catholic leaders in El Salvador also serve as intermediaries between the guerrillas and government officials, are known to meet privately with rebel leaders, and often work to expedite the evacuation of wounded insurgents or make other requests on their behalf. Moreover, many Salvadorans, especially the military, view any church criticism of the government as tantamount to support for the FMLN. [REDACTED]

9. The government is very sensitive to charges of persecution of religious workers, especially in the wake of international outrage over the arrest and deportation of foreign church workers in late 1989. As a result, President Cristiani ordered that all searches of church property must be approved by the Army High Command. Although no serious incidents have occurred since early in the offensive, relations between the churches and the security forces are likely to remain uneasy as the government continues to monitor closely church activities. Because the FMLN's November offensive indicated a low level of popular support for the insurgents, the military probably is even more convinced, in our judgment, that foreign support, especially from religious and humanitarian organizations, is crucial to the FMLN's survival. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

16 April 1990  
[REDACTED]

## The Situation in El Salvador

### The Insurgency and Negotiations

Peace talks between the government and the FMLN insurgents are scheduled to resume in early May, and both sides appear more flexible than in the past.

- The government has dropped its precondition of a cease-fire and the military is publicly supporting the government's peace initiatives.
- The FMLN insurgents, increasingly isolated internationally, may be more inclined to negotiate seriously.
- Some FMLN leaders [REDACTED] are considering participating in the 1991 municipal and legislative elections, either directly or through a coalition of leftist parties.
- Nonetheless, some elements of the FMLN continue to favor a purely military victory, [REDACTED] and rogue units which oppose the negotiations [REDACTED] plan to continue operations. [REDACTED]

The FMLN is still trying to recover from its military setbacks in the offensive last November.

- The rebels demonstrated combat viability, but took heavy casualties and failed to achieve their major objectives.
- Although some rebels threaten a new offensive if the upcoming talks fail, others claim they need more time to recruit, train, and reequip their forces. [REDACTED]

### Human Rights

Politically-motivated killings have declined significantly over the past decade as successive governments and military leaders have made improvements in human rights a priority. Nevertheless, human rights cases often languish in the courts or

[REDACTED]

fail to result in convictions because of political sensitivities and other problems.

- The investigation of the murders of the six Jesuit priests in San Salvador last November was generally praised by both domestic and international audiences. The case, however, is bogged down in the country's troubled judicial system.
- The judicial system remains overburdened, inefficient, and often administered by inept officials swayed by bribes or intimidation. Efforts at judicial reform--while supported by President Cristiani--promise to be difficult and politically controversial. [REDACTED]

Although the government's human rights record continues to be subjected to intense international scrutiny, it is much less an issue inside El Salvador.

- A March CID-Gallup poll indicates most Salvadorans regard the FMLN as the worst offender of human rights. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

#### EL SALVADOR: Officers Want Jesuit Murders Solved

Many Salvadoran officers [REDACTED] are dissatisfied with the way their leaders have handled the investigation of the Jesuit murders. [REDACTED] A senior officer [REDACTED] has said an increasing number believe the High Command ordered the killings. Colonel Benavides, the most senior officer charged so far, [REDACTED] is ready to say he acted on orders from armed forces Chief of Staff Ponce that the priests be killed. Meanwhile, a group of officers reportedly has given Ponce a list of corrupt commanders it wants removed, mostly members of the powerful military academy class of 1966 known as the Tandonas. [REDACTED]

Comment: No evidence has emerged directly implicating the High Command in the killings, but many Salvadoran officers apparently are concerned that a high-level coverup is damaging the armed forces and jeopardizing US aid. Many junior and senior officers may also be trying to link Ponce to the murders to head off his long-delayed appointment as minister of defense and to break the dominance of the Tandonas. At a minimum, Ponce is acquiescing in the military's stonewalling on the civilian investigation of the case, including destruction and concealment of evidence. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

11 August 1980

NOV 1980



[REDACTED]

18 September 1990

[REDACTED]

### The Situation in El Salvador

President Cristiani, hoping to head off cuts in US military aid to El Salvador, plans to meet with key members of Congress when he visits Washington next week (24 September). He probably will cite his government's commitment to ongoing negotiations with the FMLN guerrillas as well as the rebels' continued preparations for large-scale military operations. The President expects tough questions about the Jesuit murders and the glacial pace of the investigation.

- Cristiani will likely focus on the Senate, which is scheduled to vote this month on the Leahy-Dodd Bill, which would halve the \$85 million in FY91 US military assistance; the House already has approved a similar measure. The bill would reinstate the full amount if the guerrillas launch an offensive, pull out of the negotiations, or receive substantial new arms shipments. On the other hand, San Salvador could lose even the remaining \$42.5 million if it breaks off talks, fails to show good faith on the Jesuit case, or falls to a coup.
- The Congress will likely learn this week that [REDACTED] has informed Cristiani the remaining \$19 million of FY90 military assistance has been suspended because of the lack of progress on the Jesuit case, [REDACTED]

### Status of the Jesuit Case

Despite continual prodding from [REDACTED] the investigation into the murder of the six Jesuit priests on 16 November 1989 has not progressed. [REDACTED] indicates that neither the recent unprecedented appearance by Cristiani before the presiding judge, nor the testimony of some senior officers have eased suspicions--even among some Salvadoran officers--that the decision to kill the priests was made by the top levels of the military.

- Defense Minister Ponce--who was Chief of Staff at the time--has told [REDACTED] that the commanders held a strategy session on the night before the killings but insists they made no decision to kill the Jesuits.

Approved for Release \*

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- Contradictory testimony, the disappearance of key evidence, and the reluctance of senior officers to volunteer information, however, bolster suspicions of high-level military complicity. Such allegations are well-known to US Congressmen.
  - In August, [REDACTED] Col. Rivas, head of the government's Special Investigations Unit, told [REDACTED] that the decision to kill the Jesuits was indeed made at the commanders' meeting on 15 November and implied that Col. Ponce was party to the decision. [REDACTED]
  - Further clouding the government's record is the recent promotion of Col. Ponce to Defense Minister. The possibility of his implication in the decision to kill the priests or the subsequent cover-up will make it difficult for Cristiani to prove his government's willingness to punish all those responsible. We have no evidence of Ponce's direct involvement in the murders, but he has, at a minimum, acquiesced in the cover-up. [REDACTED]

#### Little Progress on Dialogue

The fourth round of government-guerrilla talks under UN auspices concluded this week with little apparent progress.

- The government is hoping for a cease-fire agreement prior to the March 1991 legislative elections but continues to balk at rebel demands to purge the Army, offering instead cosmetic changes such as abolishing the civil defense program. San Salvador reportedly will consider more extensive reforms only after a verifiable cease-fire is in place.
- Sweeping command changes this month removed many incompetent and corrupt officers but did not go far enough to appease the guerrillas.
- The FMLN--which [REDACTED] is increasingly divided over the value of negotiations--has hardened its position. [REDACTED] indicates that some guerrilla commanders hope the government will walk out of the talks and give the rebels an excuse for a new round of attacks, including the assassination of military and civilian leaders.

[REDACTED]

-- Although they differ over timing and tactics, the five key rebel commanders [REDACTED] have agreed to initiate a major military campaign. We believe the rebels are prepared for large-scale operations and are waiting only for the order to begin. [REDACTED]

This report was prepared by the U.S. Government. It provides data on alleged human rights violations by the FMLN. Previous reports provided to the Ad Hoc and Truth Commissions dealt with alleged human rights violations by the Salvadoran Government. While this document is based on the best information available to the U.S. Government, the U.S. Government cannot provide any guarantee of the accuracy of the report.

## I. ASSASSINATIONS AND KIDNAPPINGS OF LOCAL OFFICIALS

The U.S. Embassy Human Rights report on El Salvador for 1989 noted that "during much of 1989 the FMLN pursued a public policy of attempting to make the country 'ungovernable' through increased urban bombings and assassinations against conservative intellectuals, newspaper columnists, civilian employees of the military, former FMLN members, mayors, and government ministers and their families." The attacks on mayors and other local officials began in the early 1980s and intensified as the civil strife worsened. In 1985 the FMLN began a systematic campaign to eliminate governmental authority in areas the guerrillas claimed to control.

April 3, 1983. Elsazar Cruz, Mayor of San Cayetano Istepeque, San Vicente Department, was killed by 15 heavily armed FMLN guerrillas from the FDR faction who attacked and briefly occupied the town. The assailants also destroyed the mayor's files. Three other municipalities--Guadalupe, Verapaz, and San Lorenzo--were also attacked on the same day; 17 persons were reportedly killed in the four towns.

July 10, 1983. FMLN guerrillas seized the town of Nueva Granada, Usulután Department, and killed the Christian Democratic mayor, Roberto Rendon, who they charged supported the civil defense paramilitary patrols.

January, 1984. Maria Ovidia Amaya, the ARENA mayor of Yamabal, Morazan Department, was forced from her home and shot.

January, 1984. An ARENA deputy from Usulután, Ricardo Arnaldo Pohl, was assassinated.

January, 1985. The FMLN killed the mayor of San Jorge, San Miguel Department, during an attempted kidnapping.

May 2, 1985. The newly appointed Christian Democratic mayor of San Jorge, Edgar Mauricio Valenzuela, was taken from his home and slain because he had disregarded guerrilla orders and accepted the position.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

May 16, 1985. FMLN guerrillas assassinated Dr. Jose Rodolfo Araujo, a magistrate on the Military First Instance Court in the capital; the FMLN claimed responsibility for the attack in a subsequent Radio Venceremos broadcast. [REDACTED]

August 16, 1985. Baudelio Aviles, the former ARENA mayor of El Paisnal, San Salvador Department, was killed and his wife and sister wounded during an FMLN attack on his home. [REDACTED]

1985. The FMLN also kidnapped 28 mayors in 1985 and used them as part of a ransom package for the release of captured or imprisoned FMLN leaders and combatants. Some of the mayors were held for over six months. On September 2, a reporter from the Salvadoran newspaper La Prensa Grafica observed a Radio Venceremos broadcast from Perquin, Morazan Department. Participants included ERP chief Joaquin Villalobos, PCS chief Shafik Handal, and nine of the kidnapped mayors. In October, all 28 mayors were ransomed by the government; they promptly resigned from their posts. [REDACTED]

1986. At least eight mayors and one former mayor were assassinated by the FMLN. At least 95 of El Salvador's 262 mayors were unable to carry out their duties in their own towns and sought refuge in departmental capitals; most had been threatened with death for cooperating with the government. [REDACTED]

January, 1987. The FMLN kidnapped three additional mayors as part of a campaign called "Heroic January--Parabundo Marti Lives." In Radio Venceremos broadcasts the guerrillas threatened all mayors and demanded their resignations. The FMLN kidnapped at least six additional mayors during the year and, beginning with the slaying of the mayor of Sensembra in September, initiated an intensive assassination campaign against mayors and other local officials. [REDACTED]

September 28, 1987. In the early morning hours, FMLN guerrillas murdered Isidra Andrade, the Christian Democratic mayor of Sensembra, Morazan Department. The 48-year-old Andrade was forced from her house and shot and killed on her patio in the presence of her young daughter. The Salvadoran daily El Mundo noted that the murder may have been motivated by both personal and political reasons. Mayor Andrade's brother Felix, an FMLN squad leader at the time, was believed to have been behind the assault. [REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

March 17, 1988. Guerrillas attacked the town of Azacualpa in southeastern Chalatenango Department and kidnapped Mayor Sergio Romero, a member of the National Conciliation Party. On the same day, the FMLN's "Radio Venceremos" first announced that the mayor had been killed in combat. The Salvadoran military, however, stated that Mr. Romero was killed as part of the FMLN's campaign against the upcoming elections. The [REDACTED] attributed Mr. Romero's death to the FMLN, reporting that he was beaten to death and his face mutilated.

[REDACTED]

April 14, 1988. During the night, guerrillas who identified themselves as members of the "Chico Sanchez" Eastern Front of the FMLN, took Pedro Ventura from his home and shot him to death in front of his wife and children. The victim, a member of the ARENA party, was mayor-elect of San Isidro, Morazan.

[REDACTED]

On April 16, 1988 Radio Venceremos claimed responsibility for Ventura's execution and stated that it was carried out because the mayor had failed to heed an FMLN warning not to participate in the elections or to continue his work as mayor.

[REDACTED]

May 11, 1988. During the night, Terancio Rodriguez, the 38-year-old ARENA mayor of Perquin, Morazan Department, was assassinated by an unidentified group of FMLN guerrillas on the patio of his house.

[REDACTED]

August 21, 1988. Guerrillas identifying themselves as members of the FMLN kidnapped and killed Dolores Molina, mayor of the small municipality of Lolotiquillo, Morazan Department. A member of the Christian Democratic Party, Molina was severely beaten before his execution, according to Morazan deputy Margarita Castro.

[REDACTED]

A communique issued by the FMLN on August 22 announced that Molina had been executed for participating in the government's counterinsurgency operations.

[REDACTED]

October 25, 1988. Mayor Lucio Salvador Perla of Sociedad, Morazan Department was taken from his house by FMLN guerrillas who accused the ARENA member of assisting the government's civil defense program and killed him minutes later.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On October 27, Radio Venceremos claimed responsibility for the execution. On November 6, Gregorio Rosa Chavez, Auxiliary Bishop of San Salvador, condemned the FMLN for the assassination of three mayors, including Lucio Salvador.

[REDACTED]

October 30, 1988. Jose Alberto Lopez Lopez, the Christian Democratic mayor of Guatajiagua, Morazan Department, was kidnapped from his home by guerrillas believed to be elements of the FMLN. Lopez's body was found in a rural area the next morning. On November 6, Gregorio Rosa Chavez, Auxiliary Bishop of San Salvador, condemned the FMLN for the assassination of three mayors, including Lopez.

[REDACTED]

October 31, 1988. ARENA member Jose Ulises Hernandez, Mayor of Nueva Granada, Usulután Department, was taken from his home at 7:00 PM by two guerrillas. According to local press reports the assailants, members of the FPL, shot the mayor shortly thereafter. Eyewitnesses stated that Hernandez' family attempted to drive him to San Miguel hospital, but he died enroute.

[REDACTED]

During a homily, Msgr. Gregorio Rosa Chavez, the Auxiliary Bishop of San Salvador, condemned such "barbaric actions against civilian officials chosen by the people" and asserted, "We express our vigorous rejection of these acts despite the reasons the guerrillas allege to justify the unjustifiable".

[REDACTED]

November 25, 1988. ARENA member Napoleon Alexander Villafuerte, the Mayor of Sesori, San Miguel Department, was abducted and killed by three members of the ERP from the Northern San Miguel subzone. One of the three used the pseudonym "Arnolfo." "Lucio," ERP Chief of Masas in the Northern San Miguel Subzone, gave the order to kill Villafuerte. In a Radio Venceremos broadcast the next day, the FMLN took credit for the assassination and reminded all local mayors and officials that "we will not allow them to operate in disputed areas under guerrilla control as instruments of counterinsurgency war plans. We urge mayors and officials to refrain from participating in such activities and to resign. Otherwise, they will continue to be targets of our units for participating in the dictatorship's counterinsurgency war apparatus."

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

January 27, 1985. Vincent Flores, the 40-year-old Governor of Usulután, was assassinated by a unit of the FMLN. Flores was the PDC secretary general in the department. The governor's secretary reported that the attackers appeared at Flores' residence in Villa El Triunfo in the morning, shot the victim, and left a poster at the site that stated: "For not keeping your promise and for collaborating with the Yankees". On January 29, Archbishop Rivera y Damas strongly condemned the governor's murder and the bombing of the home of the defense minister's mother.

[REDACTED]

## II. ASSASSINATIONS OF PROMINENT CIVILIANS

June 27, 1983. Rene Barrios Amaya, former labor leader, first secretary of the Constituent Assembly, and ARENA deputy, was assassinated by several unidentified individuals on the southern outskirts of the capital. In a communique issued several hours later, the FPL claimed responsibility for the slaying.

[REDACTED]

January 27, 1984. FMLN guerrillas killed ARENA assembly deputy Ricardo Arnaldo Pohl as he drove his daughter to school in San Salvador. The Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front of the FPL claimed responsibility.

[REDACTED]

February 25, 1984. Roberto Ismael Ayala, a PAISA deputy from Cabanas department, was shot to death in San Salvador by two young men. Although no terrorist group claimed responsibility for the slaying, the [REDACTED] strongly suspected the Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front of the FPL.

[REDACTED]

March 14, 1984. Hector Tulio Flores, a PCN deputy, was shot dead by unidentified assailants. The Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front of the FPL claimed responsibility.

[REDACTED]

March 31, 1984. Dr. Rafael Harbun, a leading ARENA ideologue and well-known conservative writer and newspaper correspondent, was assassinated by urban commandos. The PRTC claimed responsibility for the slaying in a communique released on April 2, describing the killing as "revolutionary action: death to political harborers of the death squads".

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

December 7, 1984. Esteban Aristides Figueroa, the director of the San Salvador Light Company, was shot to death in downtown San Salvador. The Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front of the FPL claimed responsibility. [REDACTED]

October 26, 1987. Herbert Ernesto Anaya Sanabria, President of the nongovernmental Human Rights Commission (CDHES), was assassinated in San Salvador. The victim was in the parking lot of his residential complex, waiting to take his wife and their five children to school, when two men shot him with small caliber weapons. [REDACTED]

Anaya, a member of the ERP, had been imprisoned from May 1986 until February 1987, when he was one of 57 insurgents released from prison in exchange for the FMLN's release of a kidnapped Air Force colonel. [REDACTED]

Shortly after the assassination of Anaya the FMLN issued a communique charging the Salvadoran Army and Duarte government with the crime. The insurgents also suspended the dialogue with the government and declared a three-day national transportation stoppage in early November "to show the people's rejection of the repressive escalation unleashed by the Duarte government. . . ." [REDACTED]

On December 23, the National Police arrested ERP member Jorge Alberto Miranda Arevalo, alias "Erick" and "Jacinto," in the San Salvador neighborhood of Zacamil. During interrogation, Miranda admitted to having taken part in Anaya's assassination. According to Miranda, the ERP had ordered Anaya's death because he had been passing information to the armed forces and was no longer effective as president of the CDHES. During the assault Miranda provided security for the gunman who killed Anaya, another cell member known only as "Carlos." A third insurgent, Romualdo Alberto Zelaya, alias "Jose," drove the escape vehicle. Miranda was sentenced to a 30-year prison term for the murder of Anaya. [REDACTED]

December 6, 1988. Francisco Ismael Diaz, the press and propaganda secretary of the 22,000-member Salvadoran Peasant Central (CCS) and former mayor of Lolotique, San Miguel Department, was slain by guerrillas after he was kidnapped near Lolotique. His younger brother, who was present during Diaz' abduction, identified the kidnappers as members of the FMLN. Diaz' corpse was discovered the next day in the vicinity of Sesori, about 15 kilometers north of Lolotique. He had been shot at least once in the head. Diaz, leader of the CCS agricultural cooperative of Lolotique, had refused to

[REDACTED]

cooperate with the FMLN, despite having received two threatening letters. ERP member Andres Perez allegedly participated in the assassination of Diaz. [REDACTED]

An FMLN communique issued after the slaying stated that Diaz had been killed because he had helped the Army's counterinsurgency campaign. [REDACTED]

March 15, 1989. An armed man assassinated Francisco L. Peccorini, an American citizen and one of the leaders of the Committee for the Rescue of the National University. The victim was shot when his car stopped at a traffic light on Avenida Olimpica, near the Flor Blanca Stadium in San Salvador. No group claimed responsibility for the slaying. A former Jesuit, retired professor, and conservative political commentator, Peccorini had returned to El Salvador from the United States in 1987. He spoke against the FMLN and its use of the National University for subversive activities. [REDACTED]

Two other attacks on members of the Committee had occurred earlier. On November 25, 1988 three grenades were thrown at the son and daughter-in-law of Rafael Antonio Mendez, head of the Committee; the daughter-in-law was injured. Mendez publicly blamed University Unity, a political group at the National University, for the attack. On March 10, 1989 armed men shot at Mendez's vehicle, lightly wounding him as well as his bodyguard and Gladis Larromana, a secretary recently released from the University. [REDACTED]

The [REDACTED] commented that university students operating out of the campus as FMLN urban commandos probably assassinated Peccorini and suggested the slaying was an indication that the Rescue Committee's efforts were perceived by the FMLN as a threat to its control of the University. [REDACTED]

On July 25, 1989 former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White described [REDACTED] a meeting he had recently attended in Mexico with Ferman Cienfuegos and other FMLN officials. White stated that during the meeting the FMLN had acknowledged its responsibility for recent acts of terrorism including the killing of Peccorini and the bombing of Vice-President Merino's house--but not the killings of Minister Rodriguez Porth and Edgar Chacon. The FMLN admitted, however, that the killings had worked against FMLN interests. Cienfuegos stated that the FMLN was debating a change in policy regarding assassinations, under which the high command would decide who would be killed by name and acknowledge responsibility for all such acts. Cienfuegos indicated that part of the reason for the change was a lack of



[REDACTED]

precision in the orders passed to urban commando cells.  
[REDACTED]

On February 2, 1992 ERP leader Joaquin Villalobos and his deputy Ana Guadalupe Martinez discussed [REDACTED] "mistakes" made in urban terror tactics. One was the wave of civilian killings launched by the FMLN high command in the late 1980s. Among the victims of that campaign listed by the guerrilla leader was Francisco Peccorini. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, alias "Roberto," was charged with the murder of Edgar Chacon, as well as numerous others including Peccorini. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo or "Roberto" was identified as a former FAL political commander who was arrested by Treasury Police in San Salvador on December 30, 1989. [REDACTED]

February 16, 1989. Napoleon Romero Garcia, alias "Miguel Castellanos," a 42-year-old former guerrilla commander who had defected from the FMLN, was machine-gunned to death as he left his office in northern San Salvador by car. For several years Castellanos had been a leader of the FPL, but in 1985 he had renounced violence and, along with other former guerrillas, formed the Center for the Study of the National Reality, with the goal of promoting democracy. Radio Venceremos announced the death of "traitor" Castellanos immediately after the attack, but never formally claimed responsibility for the slaying. The FPL's clandestine radio also announced the "execution" and characterized it as a victory of the people and a warning to traitors. [REDACTED]

In mid-February, 1989 a leader in the FPL urban structure in San Salvador, alias "Daniel", boasted that he and several other unidentified individuals had participated in bringing Castellanos to justice. [REDACTED]

On October 24, 1989 President Cristiani revealed in a press conference that, according to ballistic experts, the weapons used to kill Castellanos were the same as those used to assassinate Rodriguez Porth. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, alias "Roberto," was charged with the murder of Castellanos, as well as numerous others. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcano or "Roberto" has been identified as a former FAL political commander who was arrested by Treasury Police in San Salvador on December 30, 1989.

[REDACTED]

April 9, 1989. Jose Roberto Garcia Alvarado, the Attorney General of El Salvador, was killed in his armored car. As the vehicle was stopped at a traffic light, an unidentified assailant jumped from a truck, placed a cone-shaped device on top of the passenger side--directly above Garcia--and escaped on foot. The powerful blast killed the attorney general instantly, but his driver and bodyguard survived.

[REDACTED]

Immediately after the attack, an obscure urban commando group calling itself the "Gerardo Barrios Civic Force" telephoned a San Salvador radio station and claimed responsibility for the slaying. The January 10, 1990 edition of Proceso, a weekly publication of the Jesuit-run Central American University, stated in an editorial that the Armed Forces of Liberation (FAL) had claimed responsibility for Garcia's assassination.

[REDACTED]

On February 2, 1992, ERP leader Joaquin Villalobos and his deputy Ana Guadalupe discussed [REDACTED] "mistakes" made in urban terror tactics, including the wave of civilian killings launched by the FMLN high command in the late 1980s. Among the victims of that campaign listed by the guerrilla leader was Attorney General Garcia.

[REDACTED]

June 9, 1989. Jose Antonio Rodriguez Porth, having served as Minister of the Presidency for eight days, was assassinated in front of his home in San Salvador. Three to four men using automatic rifles killed Rodriguez, his driver, and his orderly.

[REDACTED]

The FMLN was accused of the crime, but did not respond for several days; when it did, the organization pledged an investigation to determine if any of its combatants had been involved. In a radio communique on June 15, 1989, the FMLN General Command denied responsibility for the slaying and claimed that it had no reason to commit such an act.

[REDACTED]

Elements of the PRTC Mardoqueo Cruz Urban Commandos unit were responsible for the slaying, which was approved in advance by PRTC leader Francisco Jovel Urquilla, alias "Roberto Roca." He ordered the unit not to claim responsibility for the assassination, because it had not been authorized by the FMLN high command. FMLN leaders,

[REDACTED]

however, were informed of the ERP's involvement after the fact. The unit responsible for the slaying worked under the direction of Miguel Angel Alvarado Osorio, alias "Jose Juan Obregon" and Gerardo Jacinto Melgar, alias "Wilbur Mendoza," both members of the PRTC central committee. [REDACTED]

During a press conference on October 24, 1989 President Cristiani stated that according to ballistic experts, the weapons used to kill Rodriguez Porth were the same as those used to kill "Miguel Castellanos." [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, alias "Roberto" was charged with the murder of Edgar Chacon, as well as numerous others, including Rodriguez Porth. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, or "Roberto," was a former FAL political commander who was arrested by Treasury Police in San Salvador on December 30, 1989. [REDACTED]

On February 2, 1992 ERP leader Joaquin Villalobos and his deputy Ana Guadalupe Martinez discussed [REDACTED] "mistakes" made in urban terror tactics. One was the wave of civilian killings launched by the FMLN high command in the late 1980s. Among the victims listed by the guerrilla leaders was Jose Antonio Rodriguez Porth. [REDACTED]

July 19, 1989. Guillermo Payes Interiano, rightwing political analyst and member of Edgar Chacon's conservative think-tank, the International Relations Institute, was shot in the back, arm, and neck as he entered a business establishment in San Salvador; he died on August 21, 1989. Payes was president of the Association of Salvadoran professionals and a strong supporter of the ARENA Party. [REDACTED]

The FMLN publicly denied responsibility for the murder of Payes, blaming it, along with the deaths of Chacon and Rodriguez, on a power struggle within the ARENA party. [REDACTED]

During a meeting with [REDACTED] on February 2, 1992 ERP leader Joaquin Villalobos listed Guillermo Payes as one of the victims of the campaign of civilian killings launched by the FMLN high command in 1989. [REDACTED]

During a press conference on December 9, 1989 President Cristiani implicated "Jaime," an FPL urban commando operating from the University of El Salvador in Chacon's murder. Cristiani stated that according to ballistic



[REDACTED]

tests, a .45 caliber pistol used by "Jaime" to shoot Francisco Guerrero also had been used to murder Chacon and Payes. [REDACTED]

On July 23, 1989 Salvadoran police arrested suspected FMLN member Adolfo Aguilar and charged him with the murders of Gabriel Payes and Edgar Chacon. As of January 1992, his case was under consideration by the 6th Criminal Court of San Salvador. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, alias "Roberto," was charged with the murder of Payes, among many others. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, or "Roberto," was identified as a former FAL political commander who was arrested by Treasury Police in San Salvador on December 30, 1989. [REDACTED]

June 30, 1989. Edgar Chacon, rightwing intellectual, political analyst, and President of the conservative International Relations Institute, was slain by gunfire while his auto was stopped in traffic at a San Salvador intersection. The same day the FMLN issued a communique denying responsibility for the attack, claiming that Chacon died as the result of a "war" among rightist groups "with the participation of the CIA." But President Alfredo Cristiani blamed the FMLN guerrillas for the murder. [REDACTED]

On July 25, 1989 during a meeting in Mexico between FARN leader Ferman Cienfuegos and former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White, Cienfuegos admitted FMLN responsibility for a number of killings of prominent civilians but denied that the FMLN had killed Chacon. [REDACTED]

During a discussion with [REDACTED] on February 21, 1990, Hector Silva, a leader of the leftist Popular Social Movement (MPSC) stated that there were increasing indications that the FMLN--specifically urban units of the PCES--had killed "Chachi" Guerrero and most likely had killed Rodriguez Porth and Edgar Chacon. [REDACTED]

On February 2, 1992 ERP leader Joaquin Villalobos and his deputy Ana Guadalupe Martinez discussed with [REDACTED] "mistakes" made in urban terror tactics, including the wave of civilian killings launched by the FMLN high command in the late 1980s. Among the victims of the campaign listed by the guerrilla leaders was Edgar

[REDACTED]

Chacon. [REDACTED]

During a press conference on December 9, 1989 President Cristiani implicated "Jaime," an FPL urban commando operating from the University of El Salvador in Chacon's murder. Cristiani stated that according to ballistic tests, a .45 caliber pistol used by "Jaime" to shoot Francisco Guerrero also had been used to murder Chacon and Payes. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, alias "Roberto," was charged with the murder of Chacon, as well as numerous others, including Miguel Castellanos, Peccorini, Payes, Rodriguez Porth, Casanova, and "Chachi" Guerrero. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo or "Roberto" was identified as a former FAL political commander who was arrested by Treasury Police in San Salvador on December 30, 1989. [REDACTED]

On July 23, 1989 Salvadoran police arrested suspected FMLN member Adolfo Aguilar and charged him with the murders of Gabriel Payes and Edgar Chacon. As of January 1992, Aguilar's case was under consideration by the 6th Criminal Court of San Salvador. [REDACTED]

November 28, 1989. Francisco Jose "Chachi" Guerrero, a former foreign minister and former President of the Salvadoran Supreme Court, was machine-gunned in his car by FMLN urban commandos in a yellow Volkswagen at a San Salvador intersection; he died later that day. Guerrero's security men killed one of the two assailants and wounded and captured the other. The government communique issued on the same day accused the FMLN of the crime. An FMLN spokesman in Costa Rica, rejected the accusation on November 28 and announced that the leadership of the FMLN was preparing an official communique on Guerrero's death. The wounded assailant, Cesar Ernesto Erazo Cruz, a member of the FPL, confessed to participating in Guerrero's slaying. [REDACTED]

Cesar Erazo was brought to trial in the 6th Criminal Court of San Salvador where, on July 21, 1992, he was acquitted of the murder of Guerrero. Erazo still faces a charge in connection with his escape from prison, but was released on bail on August 13, 1992. [REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

During a discussion with [REDACTED] on February 21, 1990, Hector Silva, a leader of the leftist Popular Social Movement stated that there were increasing indications that the FMLN--specifically urban units of the PCES--had killed Guerrero. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, alias "Roberto," was charged with the murder of Guerrero, as well as several others. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, or "Roberto," was identified as a former FAL political commander who was arrested by Treasury Police in San Salvador on December 30, 1989. [REDACTED]

On February 2, 1992, ERP leader Joaquin Villalobos and his deputy Ana Guadalupe Martinez discussed [REDACTED] "mistakes" made in urban terror tactics, including the wave of civilian killings launched by the FMLN high command in the late 1980s. Among the victims of the campaign listed by the guerrilla leaders was Francisco Jose Guerrero. [REDACTED]

### III. OTHER CIVILIAN VICTIMS OF FMLN VIOLENCE

July, 1984. Miguel Portillo was reportedly killed in Quetzaltenango, La Libertad Department, by the Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front of the FPL. [REDACTED]

October 26, 1984. Three men claiming to be members of the FPL shot Raul Melendez Aquino, the 62-year-old supervisor of security guards at the U.S. Embassy as he walked near the San Salvador Maternity Hospital. [REDACTED]

November 17, 1984. Santiago Carcamo Segovia, the supervisor of the mobile vehicle patrol for the US Embassy, was shot to death. The Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front of the FPL claimed responsibility. [REDACTED]

November, 1984. Marco A. Navarro, a guard at the Ministry of Justice in San Salvador, was shot to death by the Clara Elizabeth Ramirez Front of the FPL. [REDACTED]

November 12, 1987. Billy Mejico Quinteros Martinez, a driver for the US Defense Attache's office, was abducted while [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

refueling an Embassy vehicle in San Salvador. He was killed by five bullets fired into his head and back. The FMLN claimed responsibility. [REDACTED]

December 12, 1987. FMLN guerrillas trapped seven Usulután coffee workers, including women and children, in a storage building and raked the doors with machine-gun fire while igniting the building with torches, burning them alive. [REDACTED]

May 22, 1989. FMLN guerrillas ambushed a civilian van carrying 15 people on the Santa Ana highway near Tacachico. The guerrillas exploded two mines on the road and then machine-gunned the vehicle, killing eight persons, including two children. In a broadcast on Radio Venceremos the FMLN admitted responsibility and deplored the loss of civilian lives. [REDACTED]

October 17, 1989. Maria Isabel Casanova Porras, the 23-year-old daughter of retired Colonel Edgardo Casanova Vejar, was machine-gunned to death near her home in Santa Tecla. The university student was driving unaccompanied to a local gym when urban commandos using AK-47s attacked her car. An official government communique issued on the same day blamed the FMLN for the assassination. Initially, the FMLN Modesto Ramirez Urban Commandos claimed responsibility in a telephone call to a local radio station, but three hours later the FMLN General Command denied responsibility, noting that "it is not the policy of the FMLN to kill the relatives of military chiefs".

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, alias "Roberto" was charged with the murder of Casanova, as well as several others. [REDACTED]

Pablo Salvador Carcamo, or "Roberto," was identified as a former FAL political commander who was arrested by Treasury Police in San Salvador on December 30, 1989. [REDACTED]

January 25, 1990. An FMLN urban commando squad attacked the San Salvador residence of presidential advisor Saul Suster, killing two of his bodyguards. [REDACTED]

March 23, 1990. Otto Valdemar Sorto, the son-in-law of Air Force Commander General Rafael Villamariona, was shot and seriously wounded as he left his home. The 25-year-old Sorto died of the wounds on April 9, 1990. The FMLN claimed responsibility. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

June 18, 1990. Berta Flores Beltran and Maria Elena Romero were killed when alleged FMLN extremists opened fire with AK-47s on a house in Mejicanos. [REDACTED]

#### IV. KIDNAPPING OF THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER

September 10, 1985. Ines Guadalupe Duarte Duran, the eldest daughter of then President Jose Napoleon Duarte and a 35-year-old mother of three, was abducted by a heavily armed group of men as she arrived for classes at the University of New El Salvador. Her companion, 23-year-old Ana Cecilia Villeda Sosa was also kidnapped. The operation left Duarte's driver dead and her security guard seriously injured. [REDACTED]

Three days after the abduction, Duarte's kidnappers contacted government officials and began probing their willingness to exchange captured FMLN leaders for Duarte. With a motive for the abduction established, suspicions were immediately cast on the FAL faction. Government security forces had recently captured the second highest ranking FAL leader, deputy secretary general Americo Mauro Araujo Ramirez, alias "Comandante Hugo" and FAL commander Hector Antonio Acevedo Moreno, alias "Octavio Martinez." Fearing that ongoing negotiations with the government might be imperiled by the abduction, the FMLN did not publicly claim responsibility. Nevertheless, several weeks after the kidnapping, the FMLN informed key Latin American and European leaders that it had kidnapped Duarte. [REDACTED]

On October 24, 1985 after 44 days of captivity, Duarte and Villeda were released in exchange for "Comandante Hugo," "Octavio Martinez," PRTC leader alias "Nidia Diaz," 22 other insurgents held in prison, and a promise of safe conduct for 101 injured guerrillas. [REDACTED]

Duarte's recollection of events confirmed the involvement of the FAL in the abduction. Based on information provided by Duarte after her release, it appeared that she had been held in Cerro Los Lirios, a FAL stronghold on the southern slopes of the Guazapa Volcano. A 35- to 40-member FMLN unit commanded by Lieutenant alias "Junior," second in command of a FAL special forces detachment known as U-24, served as Duarte's jailers. "Junior" was reportedly killed in a firefight on April 23, 1986. [REDACTED]

According to Duarte, her captors also spoke of "Lucio" as one of their leaders. Dagoberto Sosa, alias "Lucio Martinez" was FAL chief of staff. When Duarte and Villeda were released on October 24, he was present on behalf of the FMLN.

#### V. INDISCRIMINATE USE OF IMPROVISED WEAPONS

The FMLN developed three types of improvised indirect fire weapons to launch explosive charges at targets several hundred meters away. The first, commonly known as mortero, was fashioned from steel pipes and launched a 2-kilogram charge. The mortars were sometimes launched from an abandoned vehicle rigged with explosives that would detonate after the mortars had been fired. A second weapon, the rampa, was a catapult-type system that launched a 6-kilogram charge. The third and most destructive device, the tepecuintle, was manufactured from propane gas cylinders and propelled a 16-kilogram charge.

Because these improvised devices were inaccurate or indiscriminate, they often missed their military targets and exploded in civilian areas.

January 16 and February 21, 1989. FMLN guerrillas attacked the headquarters of Military Detachment-Engineers in San Salvador, employing rampas in both attacks. Neither of these attacks caused civilian casualties, but eight homes were destroyed and 11 others seriously damaged. In Radio Venceremos broadcasts the FMLN claimed responsibility for both attacks.

February 16, 1989. FMLN guerrillas launched five rampa charges at the 6th Brigade Headquarters in Usulután Department. Three of the five charges exploded outside the compound, seriously wounding three civilians--including a small girl, destroying one civilian house, and damaging several others; there was no damage to or injury in the installation. The FMLN claimed responsibility in a Radio Venceremos broadcast.

March 15, 1989. FMLN forces attacked Military Detachment-1 installations in Chalatenango city, using rampas and small arms. Several charges missed their targets and fell on civilian homes around the installation, wounding one child and damaging five houses. In a Radio Venceremos broadcast the FMLN Modesto Ramirez Central Front claimed responsibility for the attack.



[REDACTED]

October 30, 1989. FMLN urban commandos attacked the Joint General Staff headquarters in San Salvador with homemade mortars, killing one civilian and wounding four others. All of the rounds missed the military compound and fell among civilians in a heavily travelled area of the capital. One round exploded in a Texaco gas station, damaging two cars and the station. Two rounds landed on a Chevron gas station, killing the attendant and wounding one child. Six other rounds damaged a restaurant, a military recreation center, and a barber shop. There were no military casualties. In a Radio Venceremos broadcast the FMLN's Modesto Ramirez Central Front took credit for the assault. [REDACTED]

November 11, 1989. FMLN urban commandos fired homemade mortars at the National Guard General Headquarters. Three soldiers were wounded when one round fell inside the installation. Five other rounds exploded outside the garrison, one killing two children in their home. Security forces subsequently dismantled a car bomb with six mortar rounds parked near the installation. [REDACTED]

October 17, 1990. FMLN guerrillas attacked the Salvadoran Air Force base at Illopango, using at least 18 tepezcuintles and damaging a number of aircraft and facilities, as well as a foster home for young girls. In a "war bulletin" broadcast over Radio Venceremos, the Modesto Ramirez Central Front claimed responsibility. [REDACTED]

October 23, 1990. FMLN guerrillas fired two tepezcuintles at the Salvadoran Joint General Staff Headquarters in San Salvador. Both projectiles missed their target: one landed in a parking lot, and the other hit a private home, killing an eight-year-old girl and a 17-year-old boy, and wounding three adults. [REDACTED]

March 11, 1988. Two car bombs exploded in the commercial district of Zona Rosa in the capital, injuring two civilians, destroying three cars and damaging eight others, and breaking windows in commercial buildings. Two days later, in a Radio Venceremos broadcast FMLN urban commandos were congratulated for the assault. It was the FMLN's first use of car bombs. [REDACTED]

October 18, 1988. Two car bombs were detonated simultaneously in the Escalon subdivision of San Salvador, injuring 11 civilians, damaging 21 commercial establishments, and destroying three vehicles. Two additional car bombs were [REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

discovered and deactivated by security forces that evening. In a communique issued on October 19, a guerrilla group called the "Jose Manuel Arce Commandos" took credit for the attack.

[REDACTED]

November 1, 1988. The FMLN conducted a rampa attack against the National Guard Headquarters in the capital, killing four soldiers, wounding 50 others, and causing considerable damage to the installation. In addition one round fell on a house, and several houses in the neighborhood were damaged when the vehicles carrying the rampas exploded. Four civilians were killed, including one child. The FMLN Modesto Ramirez Central Front, through a Radio Venceremos broadcast, claimed responsibility.

[REDACTED]

December 23, 1988. The FMLN attacked the Ministry of Defense compound and the Joint General Staff Headquarters in San Salvador with three rampas, killing one civilian employee and wounding one Salvadoran Army officer and four other civilian employees and causing considerable structural damage inside the compound. Two secondary explosions occurred as a result of bombs set in two pickup trucks that held the rampas, killing two civilians and wounding 45 others, mostly women and children. One truck was parked next to a government health station, which was destroyed by the explosion. The FMLN General Command, through Radio Venceremos "war reports," attributed the attack to its urban commandos.

[REDACTED]

January 20, 1989. FMLN guerrillas launched two rampas from pickup trucks at the Treasury Police garrison in the capital. Both charges exploded inside the compound, killing one policeman and wounding two others. The two trucks then exploded, killing one civilian and wounding a dozen others. At least 20 civilian homes and other buildings also were damaged. The FMLN claimed responsibility for the attack in a Radio Venceremos broadcast.

[REDACTED]

February 21, 1989. FMLN guerrillas fired rampas at the 1st Brigade Headquarters, killing two civilians and wounding four others when the projectiles fell short and exploded in civilian areas around the military installation. The two trucks transporting the rampas then exploded, damaging or destroying at least 15 civilian houses. The FMLN claimed responsibility on Radio Venceremos.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

April 5, 1989. FMLN guerrillas launched three explosives from a truck into the Artillery Brigade garrison at San Juan Opico, La Libertad Department. There was little damage to the military installation, but one civilian was injured when the truck exploded. [REDACTED]

May 22, 1991. FMLN guerrillas attacked 1st Brigade Headquarters in San Salvador with rampas. The explosives landed in a civilian area, killing two women and injuring a young girl. The military installation suffered no damage or casualties. [REDACTED]

#### Indiscriminate Use of Landmines and Booby Traps. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Country Reports on Human Rights noted that the FMLN guerrillas' use of unmarked landmines and booby traps was a major cause of peasant deaths and maimings. Planted along farm roads and paths, around electric poles downed by the guerrillas, under railroad tracks, near water sources, in farmlands, and on coffee plantations, these mines killed 52 civilians in 1988, 36 in the first eight months of 1989, 23 in the first five months of 1990, and four in the first five months of 1991. [REDACTED]

#### VI. THE FMLN'S WAR AGAINST THE SALVADORAN ECONOMY (1979-1990)

The 12-year-long Salvadoran conflict caused more than \$2 billion in losses, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The losses included direct and indirect costs (lost production and sales), damage to agriculture, industry, and commerce, and material damage to infrastructure, mass transport, and residential property. The report also estimates the resources of business firms and the government that were diverted to provide security against FMLN attacks. (U)

The Embassy noted that the estimate was conservative, since it did not attempt to quantify such factors as capital flight, foregone foreign and domestic investment, replacement cost of lost equipment, and revenue losses caused by the disruption of public sector utility services. [REDACTED]

**Infrastructure.** A key component of FMLN strategy was a campaign against the country's basic infrastructure. In March 1990, however, the FMLN pledged to halt attacks against civilian economic targets. Disruptions of the communications network declined significantly, from \$4.2 million in 1989 to \$0.5 million in 1990, though FMLN sabotage teams continued occasionally to attack telephone boxes and local and district offices of the telephone company. Direct damage to other state-owned infrastructure, such as the water system, ports, bridges, and railroads also declined, from \$1.4 million in 1989 to \$0.2 million in 1990. But FMLN forbearance did not

[REDACTED]

extend to the electric power system. In 1990 the guerrillas executed more than 1,000 bombing attacks on the electric power grid, causing \$6 million in damage and keeping most primary transmission lines operating at 15-20 percent below capacity. The frequent power outages caused serious interruptions to potable water services in large areas of the country. [REDACTED]

**Agriculture.** The war was waged primarily in the countryside, and the FMLN harassed agriculture enterprises unceasingly. Early in the war FMLN assaults resulted in massive destruction of physical plant and equipment (mills, storage silos, etc.) and crops of farms owned by the elite. Cotton production was particularly hard hit owing to the ease with which harvested cotton can be burned and the industry's concentration in the eastern--and most conflictive--third of the country. The [REDACTED] estimated direct damage to El Salvador's principal export crops in the 1990 crop year at \$6 million. As the government's agrarian reform program moved into high gear in the 1980s, FMLN incursions spread to small, medium, and cooperative farms. In these attacks the FMLN indiscriminately burned crops, destroyed farm equipment, mined fields, and gunned down livestock, particularly cattle. [REDACTED]

Farmers also faced indirect losses as combat halted harvesting, FMLN roadblocks prevented farmers from getting their produce to market, and sabotage of the power grid hampered production in cotton gins and coffee and sugar mills. The war forced thousands of farm families to flee in search of security. Many small landowners (campesinos) fled to San Salvador; unable to find jobs, this migrant underclass put further strains on the city's limited services. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DAMAGE TO THE SALVADORAN ECONOMY: 1979-1990  
(millions of US dollars)

	1989	1990	1979-90
Infrastructure <sup>a</sup>	19.0	9.8	213
Industry & Commerce <sup>b</sup>	73.5	51.0	308
Agroindustry <sup>c</sup>	40.0	42.0	744
Public Transport <sup>d</sup>	4.6	1.0	28
Residential Housing & Personal Property <sup>e</sup>	8.5	1.5	42
Security Costs <sup>f</sup>	46.0	20.0	748
	191.6	125.3	2083

- a. [REDACTED] estimate of direct property damage derived from data supplied by El Salvador's National Electric Company (CEL), National Telephone Co. (ANTEL), Port Authority (CEPA), Ministry of Planning, and National Water Utility (ANDA).
- b. Includes [REDACTED] estimate of foregone production and sales losses due to war-related business closures, electric system sabotage, as well as direct material damage. Some data derived from estimates of private sector associations and from [REDACTED].
- c. [REDACTED] estimates include the value of lost agricultural production, as well as physical destruction of crops and property. Some data derived from National Coffee Council (CSC) and National Cotton Cooperative (COPAL).
- d. [REDACTED] estimate based on Salvadoran govern, and National Association of Bus Owners data, and [REDACTED].
- e. [REDACTED] estimate using Ministry of Planning and Chamber of Construction approximations and [REDACTED].
- f. Estimate based on [REDACTED] survey conducted in 1991.



[REDACTED]

Commerce and Industry. Direct damage to this sector amounted to about \$18 million in 1989 and \$9 million in 1990. Businesses were damaged more heavily by indirect losses, such as sabotage-induced slowdowns in activity and power outages. The [REDACTED] estimated indirect losses at \$36 million in 1989 and \$42 million in 1990. [REDACTED]

Public Transport. Despite the FMLN's decade-long attempt to cripple the economy by shutting down the mass transport system using such tactics as massive bus burnings, the system did not collapse. In March 1990 the guerrillas announced that they would no longer attack commuter buses. Guerrillas burned several dozen buses in 1990, causing damage estimated at \$0.5 million, much less than previous years. [REDACTED]

Residential and Personal Property: The FMLN's inability or unwillingness to hold urban areas and rural townships minimized destruction of homes and other personal property. The urban offensive in November 1989, however, wrought unprecedented damage to residential areas; 6,200 housing units were damaged or destroyed at a cost of \$9 million. In 1990, combat damage to homes returned to the normal level of about \$1 million. Destruction of personal vehicles in firefights, terrorist ambushes, and bombings grew sharply at the end of the decade; in 1989 an estimated 175 autos were damaged or destroyed at a cost of \$875,000. And in 1990 225 autos were damaged or destroyed at cost of about \$500,000. [REDACTED]

Indirect Private and Public Security Costs. The need to take security measures to protect against FMLN attacks on public and private property was a significant cost to business and the government. Such expenses included the maintenance of guard personnel, acquiring weapons, security-related construction, and terrorist insurance payments. The [REDACTED] estimated that security related expenditures dropped from \$46 million in 1989 to \$20 million in 1990. [REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

1 The investigation of the Jesuit killings is proceeding slowly, while  
2 charges of government abuses are undercutting Salvadoran President  
3 Cristiani's efforts to improve his country's human rights image. [REDACTED]

4 The government launched an immediate investigation following the 16  
5 November murder of the six Jesuit priests, but technical, bureaucratic,  
6 manpower problems have impeded progress. Despite technical assistance from  
7 Spain and the US, government agencies, including the US-trained Special  
8 Investigations Unit and the Attorney General's office, are having  
9 difficulty coordinating their efforts and are overwhelmed with the  
10 magnitude of the task. [REDACTED]

11 Little hard evidence has emerged in the investigation of military  
12 units and potential witnesses. The government is bogged down following  
13 hundreds of mostly false leads offered in response to a \$250,000 reward.  
14 Key witnesses have changed their testimony several times, while others the  
15 government believes may have real information refuse to come forward,  
16 probably fearing retribution. [REDACTED] The process was  
17 further complicated recently when the Church's human rights group, Tutel  
18 Legal, admitted that some of its members initially removed evidence from

[REDACTED]

19 the scene including shell casings and a placard reading "death to traitor  
20 of the FMLN." [REDACTED]

21 Adding to the government's woes are charges by local and international  
22 churches that the government is systematically persecuting them. Although  
23 the vast majority of churches were not subjected to government action, 22  
24 incidents of searches and arrests occurred during the first two weeks of the  
25 FMLN offensive. The government claims that security forces targeted the  
26 churches based on intelligence that they were helping the FMLN, but, except  
27 for the discovery of a large arms cache at the home of a US church worker,  
28 the searches produced only pro-FMLN propaganda. [REDACTED]

29 COMMENT: The government and military realize their credibility and  
30 prospects for continued US aid probably are contingent on a quick  
31 resolution of the Jesuit case, and they hope foreign assistance will lend  
32 legitimacy to the investigation. Most observers believe that prospects for  
33 a successful prosecution are poor even if solid evidence or suspects are  
34 established, because of the inherent weaknesses of the judicial system.  
35 Although the military continues to believe some church groups support the  
36 FMLN, Cristiani probably will seek to reassure local church leaders that  
37 his government is not against them. He already has ordered a halt to such  
38 searches unless cleared by the Army High Command. [REDACTED]  
39 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3/4/91

## El Salvador: Little Progress in the Jesuit Murder Case [REDACTED]

The Jesuit murder case is moving slowly forward in El Salvador's troubled judicial system, but suspicions that senior military officers ordered the murders or covered up armed forces involvement linger. Conflicting evidence, government stalling, and reluctant military cooperation plagued the inquiry phase, which ended in December. Two prosecutors recently resigned from the case and accused the Attorney General's office of bending to military pressure and hampering their efforts to conduct a thorough investigation. We believe judicial maneuverings and traditional military immunity to civilian authority will continue to work against a speedy prosecution of the case. [REDACTED]

### Background

Last January, the government arrested six officers and three enlisted men, one of whom deserted and remains at large, for the murders in November 1989 of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter. The highest-ranking officer arrested, Colonel Guillermo Alfredo Benavides, belongs to the powerful military academy class of 1966, or Tandon, whose members include the Defense Minister and other senior officers. The arrests came at the end of a broad investigation--on a scale unprecedented in Salvadoran judicial history--with technical help

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

from the US, British, and Spanish Governments. The US-trained Special Investigative Unit (SIU) conducted a professional and commendable investigation that received praise from foreign police experts [REDACTED]. Although poor coordination among the SIU, the Attorney General's office, and other agencies initially delayed the investigation, ballistics tests, handwriting evidence, and statements by military personnel eventually implicated the suspects. [REDACTED]

Last December, Judge Ricardo Zamora, tasked with overseeing the inquiry, ruled evidence was sufficient to try the suspects. He charged the nine soldiers with assassination and acts of terrorism, each charge carrying three to 30-year sentences. A tenth soldier, arrested in July, was charged with destruction of evidence. The defense appealed the judge's decision and the case moved into a pretrial appeals phase during which two judges will decide whether evidence gathered during the investigation and by Judge Zamora is sufficient to go to trial. [REDACTED]

#### Military Cooperation--Some Bright Spots

Armed forces cooperation with civilian authorities in the Jesuit investigation, although at times reluctant, has been greater than in any other human rights case involving the military. Although officers have rarely participated in the prosecution of colleagues, many senior officers and officials, including Defense Minister Ponce--then Chief of Staff--offered testimony. The SIU, headed by a military officer, focused on the armed forces from the start of the inquiry and reportedly proceeded without threats or interference. On some occasions the military was even



[REDACTED]

compliant; after some criticism from the President's office that they were not being responsive to the court, the Armed Forces installed a direct phone line to Judge Zamora from the Defense Ministry. [REDACTED]

#### Problems in the Investigation

Despite these accommodations, long delays in obtaining evidence and the government's lack of aggressiveness in investigating the case provoked charges by international observers that San Salvador is not committed to bringing the perpetrators to justice. [REDACTED] Zamora continually put off asking for evidence and testimony. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] former Attorney General Colorado--who was replaced in June by Roberto Mendoza--ordered the prosecutors assigned to the case to take no initiatives. At the same time, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] no one in the Attorney General's office was responsible for managing the case or devising a prosecutorial strategy. Two of the seven prosecutors working on the case resigned in January 1991, accusing the Attorney General's office of barring them from key testimonies and censoring their questions to key military witnesses during the final months of the investigation. [REDACTED]

Although we have no evidence that any officer threatened the Judge, he was clearly hesitant to violate the norms of Salvadoran civil-military relations. [REDACTED] Zamora was reluctant to make requests of or give specific orders to the SIU--headed by Colonel Rivas--arguing that a judge does not give orders to the military. The two men met only once, in March



[REDACTED]

1990, even though both played vital roles in the investigation.

[REDACTED]

Military cooperation, moreover, has been limited to compliance with specific requests. The reluctance of officers to volunteer information, perjury, and the destruction of evidence have fed suspicions of a coverup at high levels.

- Judge Zamora jailed several enlisted men on charges of perjury after they contradicted each other on the witness stand.
- The military Honor Commission, appointed in 1989 by President Cristiani to investigate Army involvement in the murders, accomplished virtually nothing. Members contradicted themselves in testimony, some claiming they submitted a written report to the President while others swore a report was never prepared.
- Military testimony has never established the precise chain of command between Ponce and Benavides on the night of the murders and has failed to clarify doubts about a possible coverup. [REDACTED] some testimony suggests officers were aware of Benavides' role in the murders before his indictment.
- Some 70 military logbooks were destroyed weeks after the killings, an estimated 20 of which reportedly may have given evidence relevant to the case. Lieutenant Yushy Mendoza, one of the murder defendants, testified that Lieutenant Colonel Camilo Hernandez, now a codefendant charged with destruction of evidence, ordered the burning,

[REDACTED]

an accusation Hernandez denies. A notebook allegedly kept by Benavides also disappeared. [REDACTED]

Senior military commanders have not demanded that soldiers with knowledge of the case come forward, nor have they taken action against those who perjured themselves. Furthermore, all defendants have contracted with the same team of defense attorneys--who reportedly may be paid by members of the armed forces--even though several have opposing interests and contradictory defenses. The arrangement has fueled suspicion that the defense team may be more concerned with protecting the armed forces than serving its clients' needs. [REDACTED] The military, proclaiming its full support for the investigation, has repeatedly denied allegations of a coverup. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Benavides is the lone conspirator and that he ordered the killings on his own initiative without prompting from higher authorities. [REDACTED] he snapped under the stress of the November rebel offensive. [REDACTED]

#### Judicial Impediments Expected

Although the case has progressed to the pretrial appeals phase relatively quickly by Salvadoran standards, Salvadoran law and the inefficient judicial system will probably add to problems and delays in prosecuting the case. [REDACTED] the president of the appeals court, while acknowledging the case requires special attention, refuses to predict when the process will be completed. If the case is moved to trial, compiling a jury will be a lengthy process. In highly sensitive cases,

[REDACTED]

jurors, witnesses, and court officials have been subject to bribery and intimidation. Fear of retaliation could prevent many from coming to serve. Literacy requirements also limit the potential juror pool. [REDACTED]

Rules of evidence may make conviction of some suspects difficult. Laws barring codefendant testimony suggest the main evidence against Benavides, the statements of his codefendants that he ordered them to kill the priests, may be inadmissible. The only evidence against Hernandez on the destruction-of-evidence charge is also codefendant testimony. [REDACTED]

#### Prospects

Judging by past experience, we believe the case is likely to drag on for some time. Other prominent cases continue to crawl through the judicial system, including the murder of six US citizens at a cafe in 1985, and the murder of 10 peasants in San Sebastian in 1988. In the latter case, the judge last year dismissed the charges against 10 soldiers but ordered trial proceedings--which have yet to begin--against the highest-ranking officer, a major. [REDACTED]

Further help from the Armed Forces in resolving conflicting testimony or uncovering new evidence is unlikely. Suspicion of higher-level involvement, therefore, are likely to linger. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] our judgment, the military probably believes the Jesuit case no

[REDACTED]

longer presents any institutional threat as the Armed Forces  
retains the ability to control its own affairs. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## JESUIT PRIESTS MURDER

-Six Jesuit priests and two church workers were murdered on 16 November 1989.

-On 12 January GOES arrested nine soldiers (six officers and two enlisted men) for the murders, a third enlisted man who deserted in December is still at large.

-The judge in the case, Ricardo Zamora on 29 January denied a defense motion to release the suspects for lack of evidence.

-Prospects are problematic for bringing to trial Col. Benavides-the senior ranking officer in custody who reportedly issued the order to kill the Jesuits.

-Salvadoran law prohibits testimony by accomplices, [REDACTED] and thus far only the officers under arrest have implicated Benavides.

-Benavides was removed from his post as Commander of the Military School on 1 February 1990.

-Benavides has not been discharged from the military, a move which must occur before he or the other soldiers can be tried in a civilian court.

-It is rumored, the deserted enlisted man involved in the killings will surface soon in Mexico, where he will admit to his involvement and possibly implicate more senior officers.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: The Jesuit Case: Claims of Colonel Guillermo Benavides

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. In mid-April 1991, a [REDACTED] Salvadoran military officer related the following comments of a senior Salvadoran military High Command officer, who allegedly questioned Colonel Guillermo Benavides [REDACTED] after his arrest for involvement in the November 1989 murders of six Jesuit

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

priests. According to the senior officer, Benavides said that on the evening of 15 November 1989 he received direct orders to "take care of the Jesuit problem." When the senior officer questioned who issued the orders, Benavides refused to give a name. Benavides said the order unnerved him and he did not know what to do. He claimed he sought advice from then Commander of the Air Force General Juan Rafael Bustillo, who told Benavides that a good soldier follows orders and does not question them. Benavides said he posed the same question to First Brigade Commander Francisco Elena Fuentes, who shrugged and told Benavides to do as he was told. [REDACTED] comment: It is unlikely that Benavides will ever name from whom the order came, because under Salvadoran law identifying those behind the crime would not lessen any prison sentence he may receive or in any way benefit him. Naming the person would only gain Benavides a possible cell mate and a sure enemy.)

3. The senior officer said Benavides also remarked that Major Carlos Camilo Hernandez [REDACTED] was fortunate to be charged only with the relatively minor offense of destruction of evidence.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

05 March 1992

SUBJECT: HPSCI Request for Information on Background on  
Jesuit Killings

1. Following a file review of information pertinent to the murders of the Jesuit priests and the two women at the University of Central America on 15 November 1989, we find no confirmed evidence that then Air Force Commander Juan Rafael Bustillo Toledo was directly involved in the planning and/or execution of these murders.

2. This said, there is unsubstantiated reporting which indicates that he may have been privy to the fact that a decision had been made to kill the priests at some time prior to the murders. The debate concerning General Bustillo's prior knowledge of the Jesuit murders centers around the timing of a meeting reported to have occurred sometime during the afternoon of 15 November 1989 at the Salvadoran Military School. Details concerning allegations made about this meeting have been previously published in the N.Y. Times, and include information passed to Staff Delegates of Congressman John Moakley (D) of Massachusetts during their visit to El Salvador in August of 1990. Individuals reported to have been in attendance at this meeting include the Chief of the Joint Staff Colonel Rene Ponce, General Bustillo, the Directors of the National Police and National Intelligence Directorate, and several other high-ranking military officers. Unfortunately, all records pertaining to the presence of any of these officers at the Military School were destroyed by one of the conspirators.

3. If, as some reporting indicates, this meeting took place prior to the time Colonel Guillermo Benavides, the Military School Commander, issued his orders to the lieutenants who carried out the murders, then General Bustillo's level of involvement in the murders might be greater than previously indicated. General Bustillo has been reliably linked to human rights abuses in the past, and his history lends some credence to reports of his involvement in the Jesuit case.

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

4. There is other information, however, suggesting that General Bustillo's role may have been more passive; that is, he may have known of the plan and did nothing to prevent it, or he was only involved in the subsequent coverup. One report states that Colonel Benavides went to General Bustillo for advice after he received orders to kill the Jesuits. General Bustillo is purported to have responded that 'a good soldier follows orders and does not question them.' Another report states that General Bustillo offered a reward of some coveted training to one of the lieutenants implicated in the killings.

5. We hope the above information has been of some assistance. While we cannot confirm that General Bustillo had any role in the murders or the subsequent coverup, it is not outside the realm of possibility that he did either approve the action, or at least assist/support the initial coverup. As with all of the information surfacing about who in the Salvadoran military was involved in the Jesuit murders, reporting about General Bustillo is tainted by the political agendas of the reporting sources who have a tendency to want to settle old scores with their rivals in the military establishment.

[REDACTED]  
29 July 1992

[REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Information on Major Carlos Camilo Hernandez

We have no information that Deputy Commander of the Military School Maj. Carlos Camilo HERNANDEZ was directly involved in the the killing of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and the housekeeper's daughter which occurred on 16 November 1989. However, we have one report which states that Maj. HERNANDEZ ordered two officers to report to the military school on 15 November 1989. These two officers were later convicted for involvement in the Jesuit killings. Another report alleges that Major HERNANDEZ's weapon was used in the attack, and that Major HERNANDEZ had been charged with destruction of evidence in this case.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1993



27 Feb 1981

SPECIAL ANALYSIS

EL SALVADOR: The Significance of Popular Support

//The critical factor in El Salvador now is the military situation and arms flow. Over the medium term, however, the campaign to gain support from a disenchanted public will be a decisive factor.//

//The left came close to igniting a national insurrection early last year--well before the accelerated arms flow--because of its popular backing. Membership in extremist-controlled front groups exceeded 60,000, and guerrilla groups were making inroads in urban labor. The combination of street demonstrations--in some cases drawing tens of thousands--and strikes was beginning to threaten the government's control of San Salvador.//

//The government arrested the left's momentum by launching reforms and by improving security measures in the capital, but these programs have virtually stalled. The majority of the population, repelled by the violence on both sides, is still uncommitted.//

//The guerrillas are increasingly recognizing the drawbacks of alienating the populace. Previously, they had boasted publicly of scores of indiscriminate killings during takeovers of various towns. They are now more actively cultivating domestic support by reducing attacks on population centers and have established their own radio stations.//

//The insurgents, however, are not attracting much popular support. Recruitment for the guerrilla forces does not appear to be picking up.//

--continued

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

2 / 24 / 78

[REDACTED]

//There are an estimated 3,500 to 4,000 full-time armed insurgents and perhaps several thousand part-time collaborators. Moreover, guerrilla ranks were at least temporarily thinned by several hundred casualties during the recent offensive.// [REDACTED]

//If they are to gain more adherents, the guerrillas need a spectacular military success or a continuation of government insensitivity and abuse. Conversely, if the government is able to curb the excesses that characterize life in El Salvador today and follow through on reforms, it will begin to turn the tide and gain adherents for its cause.// [REDACTED]

//Government leaders recognize the need to enlist popular support. They know that failure to push ahead with their reform program leaves them vulnerable. Lack of technical and financial resources, however, and the continuing violence have permitted little forward movement on land reform, the heart of the junta's economic program.// [REDACTED]

//Most of El Salvador's cultivated land has been targeted for expropriation and redistribution, but adequate technical assistance, farm credit, and marketing organization are simply not available. Phase one of the land reform, redistribution of the largest estates, was largely completed last year. Management problems on the cooperative, however, have reduced yields and encouraged shifting from production of export to basic food crops.// [REDACTED]

//Phase two, the expropriation of the medium-sized farms has been shelved because of the impact this would have on the country's already dwindling export earnings. Completion of the so-called "land-to-the-tiller" phase is far off in the future. Trained administrative and technical personnel to administer this ambitious undertaking are not available.// [REDACTED]

//The land reform program has enraged the right. It also is opposed by the left since it threatens to increase peasant support for the government. As a result, gunmen

[REDACTED]

from both factions are killing peasants on the newly formed cooperatives and intimidating land reform administrators.//

//Despite the pressing military problems, the junta's greatest longer run vulnerability is violence that is officially tolerated. The murders in November of leftist political leaders, including a minister of the first reform junta, were the work of security forces.//

//Summary execution of prisoners is a standard practice. Widespread, and often random, violence by private rightwing groups is viewed as part of government repression because there is no official move to curb it.//

//As a result, the reputation of junta President Luarte and his Christian Democratic Party have been tarnished, and the conditional support for the government--among the populace and abroad--has been jeopardised. Many members of the 150,000-strong peasant union, the principal beneficiary of land reform, probably blame government-allied thugs for the murder of union leader Viera in January.//

//US labor organisations, which have strongly backed the government and have major influence, this month warned the government that it will lose their support if it does not improve labor relations within 90 days. Salvadoran and US labor organisations want the government to open a genuine dialogue with union leaders--rather than what they believe has been arrogant treatment. They also want ultraconservative officers sacked.//

18 Nov 19  
1983

## Special Analysis

### **EL SALVADOR: Threat From the Right**

*The more selective use of violence by extremists of the far right reflects the fear that they will lose political influence as the country moves toward presidential elections early next year. They also are frustrated by their failure to reverse the reform process, by the armed forces' loss of momentum on the battlefield, and by the government's dialogue with the insurgents. Efforts to curb terrorist activity will continue to be hampered by the organizational independence of death squads and vigilante groups, as well as by the weak resolve of government and military authorities.*

To eliminate challenges to its power, the far right traditionally has used civilian vigilante organizations, elements of the armed forces, and death squads funded and led by wealthy elites. Compartmentation, a rigid code of secrecy, and the shifting whims of extremist leaders make estimating numbers of the terrorist organizations and their personnel difficult.

The breadth of terrorist operations, however, suggests that perhaps a dozen groups may be active at any given time. Some groups frequently coordinate their activities, and a few occasionally engage in violent rivalries with each other.

Violence remains especially severe in the countryside, where elements such as the Territorial Service and Civil Defense Forces—which provide local security and collect intelligence for the military—function as peasant vigilantes. In addition, civilian mercenaries and fanatics allied with specific individuals or political groupings routinely wage their own vendettas against suspected subversives and personal enemies. Civilian terrorists also employ both active-duty and retired military personnel in their campaigns.

Death squads in the Army and the three security forces apparently operate out of urban military headquarters and rural outposts. They are led by senior enlisted personnel and junior officers, and they may function with or without the knowledge of immediate superiors. Some may owe allegiance to military officers from other units or be on the payroll of civilian sponsors. (S NF)

*continued*

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

### Motivations and Tactics

Although the level of violence against suspected subversives remains fairly steady, the increasing selectivity of terrorist operations reflects the extreme right's growing sense of political isolation and weakness. Extremists have stepped up operations against union leaders and others that they fear might rally labor behind the Christian Democrats in the election. They also are intimidating government, military, and Church officials who are supporting economic reforms.

Despite these efforts, Constituent Assembly President D'Aubuisson and other extremist leaders are likely to be deeply concerned about their failure to form a coalition that can protect their base of power. Although they have impeded efforts by moderate conservatives and liberals in the Assembly to codify land and other reforms, they have failed to halt these measures. Moreover, their sense of frustration is heightened by government efforts to develop a dialogue with the insurgents.

D'Aubuisson and other rightwing leaders now appear to believe, probably correctly, that the armed forces will be crucial in determining their future role in national politics. Consequently, a minority of officers aligned with or sympathetic to D'Aubuisson's National Republican Alliance is maneuvering for greater power in the military.

The group hopes to take advantage of the conservative political orientation of Defense Minister Vides by trying to insert itself into the military hierarchy. Rightists also are urging Vides to adopt a more aggressive strategy on the battlefield and to assume a more direct political role on behalf of the military in the government.

### Constraints on Moderation

The far right's growing influence in the military—the only institution that can quell extremist violence—is making Vides's position increasingly difficult. The Defense Minister's adherence to moderate and pragmatic leadership underscores his desire to maintain armed forces unity while also ensuring greater cooperation and material aid from Washington. At the same time he probably feels obligated to respect the prevailing consensus of the senior officer corps on issues potentially embarrassing to the military.

*continued*